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November 10, 1941

For a Second Front

by Max Werner

What Are We Waiting For? . . . . . *Editorial*

Bombing Is a Quiet Business . . *John Strachey*

Negro Morale . . . . . *Roi Ottley*

War Profits in Aluminum . . . *E. D. Kennedy*

"Dear Senator La Follette"

by Michael Straight

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Something like a Star...

OLD AS MAN is the admonition, "Hitch your wagon to a star"; young as a child is the impulse "To wish upon a star." For all men, in all time, a star has been the bright kindling point for dreams, fixed moment in time and eternity, beacon in the night and promise of the day to come.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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What Are We Waiting For?

AN AMERICAN WARSHIP has been sunk by a German torpedo. Seventy-six of her crew are still missing as we go to press. Of the identity of her assailant there can be no doubt; since this torpedo was fired Germany has officially admitted responsibility for two previous attacks on American warships in the same area of the ocean.

In this situation The New Republic urgently reiterates its plea that the United States should immediately declare war on the Axis. We do this, not because of these successive incidents and the loss of American lives involved. We have known for many months that the United States was at war with Germany in everything but name, and that loss of life was to be expected at any moment. We have no respect for a national policy which is based upon single incidents or groups of them and dictated by the fact that the people collectively lose their tempers. We ask a declaration of war in the national interest, because we consider it essential to the preservation of this country as a free democracy.

When The New Republic first proposed a declaration, in its issue of August 25, there were a great many Americans who still believed that the war could be won without our active participation. They felt that if we sent enough supplies, Britain and Russia between them could bring about a German defeat. Agreeing that the fight against fascism is as much our battle as it is that of these other countries, they nevertheless hoped that the spilling of British and Russian blood would make unnecessary the deaths of Americans. In the interval that has elapsed, the number of people who hold this view has steadily shrunk. We see now that American blood must be shed even in the process of carrying aid to Britain, Russia, China and other participants in the democratic front. In so far as our material assistance makes it increasingly likely that Hitler may lose the war, he will act with more and more violence against the United States.

Is it true that a declaration of war would cause a demand that we should spend our energies building up our own protective equipment? Even if it were true, in our judgment there are factors in the other direction that would still make a declaration desirable. One has to weigh all the advantages and disadvantages on both sides and strike a balance between them, in order to make an intelligent decision about anything. But certainly in this case, Hitler himself can easily create the public sentiment referred to, whether we declare war or not. There is something to be said for getting through this period on our own initiative and under our own control, rather than to enter it in a panic because of a surprise attack by the Germans in the air, from the sea, or in both ways, directed at our seaboard cities, or from South America against the Panama Canal and our outlying bases.

In any case, we do not believe the American people would panic very long or very seriously. In saying this, we are not indulging in chauvinism, but are only assuming that our people have the same general traits found in other nations. The universal testimony is that the bad

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part of being bombed is waiting for it to begin. Once it has started, people quickly adjust to it; anger takes the place of fear, but it is a cold anger reflected in intelligent measures for self-defense and for hurting the enemy.

Our old dilemma is still with us: the President is in some degree waiting for Congress to catch up with him, and Congress—in so far as it is not isolationist—is waiting for the President to exhibit a strong leadership. Neither of them is taking many steps to educate public opinion, though the President is doing much better in this regard than Congress. But in the meantime, public opinion itself is moving forward rapidly. Reports from the Middle West indicate that the traditional isolationism of that quarter is melting away. The Gallup polls show a steady advance which undoubtedly means we shall be ready to go to war in another few months. But another few months of delay might be fatal. Now is the time for us to strike with all our power. If we wait until Russia has, conceivably, been knocked out or the British Isles have, conceivably, been successfully invaded, our chance of winning the war will be that much lessened—will in fact be desperately small.

What could we do, with a declaration of war, that we are not now doing?

We could instantly immobilize Japan and relieve Russia of all danger through her Siberian back-door.

If, which is unlikely, Japan chose to fight, competent American military experts tell us that she could be knocked out in six months and our own back-door thereby made secure. Hitler in the meantime could do very little to hurt us.

The United States Navy, in coöperation with the British, could regain complete control of the Mediterranean and thus make possible the sort of second front in the war that Max Werner discusses in his article in this issue.

We could take the great leap forward in production of war supplies which has not yet been made because, as long as we do not actually go to war, business-as-usual is still the rule.

The question of morale, either in the army or in the civilian population, would be much ameliorated.

We could deal effectively with the German spies and saboteurs and their American friends.

Common sense tells us that even if Hitler did not intend to destroy us—which he does—we cannot live as a democratic island in a fascist world. This is especially true when we have such a large and ominous minority which does not believe in democratic principles, never has and probably never will. To survive at all in such a world we should have to regiment ourselves until our American system would be unrecognizable to those who cherish it today. If we do not play our full part in the war, we cannot play a full part in the subsequent making of the peace; in that case it is more probable that the mistakes of twenty years ago will be repeated and that our children and our children's children will have to live in a world of recurring war.

The struggle between democracy and fascism is a struggle to the death. It can never be won by staying on the defensive, by half-hearted measures. It can only be won when the American people act fully upon their determination that this ugly thing must be smashed as quickly as possible and no matter what the cost.

The Campaign in Russia

The recent news from Russia is not reassuring to the democracies. While the Germans have been stopped at present in their direct drive on Moscow, they are thrusting eastward to the south of the city in a way to make continued defense of the capital more difficult. In the Donets Basin they have achieved substantial successes and a further advance seems likely. Particularly serious is the news from the Crimean peninsula, where the Russians have been forced to abandon several important points. If Germany can get control of the whole peninsula, she has an excellent jumping-off place for the Caucasus and the Baku oil fields.

The weather has lately been hampering both sides, but the Germans more, inasmuch as their lines are now greatly extended. In the south there have been twenty successive days of rain and the roads are quagmires. In the north it has snowed, but the bitter cold that would help the German mechanized forces by freezing everything solid, has not yet been in evidence.

The loss of either Moscow or the Donets Basin, as Max Werner has already pointed out in our pages, would be a serious matter. It would not, however, mean the end of the war. The Russians have their strongest defense line along the Volga, and are prepared to fall back to that point if necessary. They would have lost much of their productive capacity, but not so much as to make a further war effort impossible.

At the moment, the desperate need is for war supplies from Britain and the United States, and apparently both these governments have at last waked up to the urgency of the situation. It is shocking to discover that until ten days ago 85 percent of the American manufacture of tanks was being kept in this country for the use of our army. Today Russia has been given an absolute priority on war materials of every type, which she should have had weeks ago. One can only hope that our tardiness has not done too much damage.

Horse Trade Over the Border

Canada has just instituted a comprehensive price-fixing law, which covers prices, wages and rentals. Canada's economy and that of the United States are closely connected. Lack of coöperation by the United States could obviously knock Canada's plans badly out of joint. Prime Minister Mackenzie King has been

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visiting President Roosevelt, to talk about this. The United States needs and should at once have a price-stabilization law. But we hope that President Roosevelt did not overlook the opportunity for a bit of sound and necessary horse trading. Runaway prices in the United States would harm Canada, by splintering the Canadian yardstick. But Canada's harsh and outmoded labor policies, upon which The New Republic has often commented, are now injuring the United States. Canada's labor policy, which includes freezing of wages but no minimum wage and which has put the whole weight of the government on the side of employers who are resisting unionization, is ideal, in the minds of our reactionary employers. But it is not the policy of the government of the United States. Canada would like some help from us, in maintaining her chosen standards. Is she prepared to take steps to help us in maintaining ours?

Lindbergh Doesn't Know

Charles A. Lindbergh, it has often been noted, never attacks the Nazis for their brutality and perfidy. He poses as a dispassionate expert who assays the war in realistic technical terms. If Mr. Lindbergh is unmoved by the moral issues, he is also ignorant of the technical aspects. In Madison Square Garden last week he once again stated his belief that Nazi mechanization and aviation have "changed the strategy not only of Europe, but of the entire world." The implication, of course, was that the Nazis' superiority in those lines is so great that they cannot be beaten. In June, 1940, Mr. Lindbergh's view might have seemed in accord with the facts. But this is November, 1941.

Doesn't Mr. Lindbergh know that the Nazis have lost their air superiority since Russia entered the war? Doesn't he know that it is the British who are now on the aerial offensive? Is he also unaware that American plane production increases monthly, that in a short time there will open near Detroit a factory which will turn out a finished bomber every thirty-four minutes on the assembly-line system?

The fact, of course, is that Mr. Lindbergh is not, and never was, a technical expert. He is a brilliant flier, yes, but he is not an industrial engineer. And it is the engineers who will ultimately overcome the superiority in machines the Nazis had in 1940. In truth Mr. Lindbergh is expert at only one thing—arousing distrust and hatred of democratic leadership.

Why Finland Fights

The Russian demand that Britain declare war on Finland, Rumania and Hungary as allies of Germany, has received no reply as yet from London. The London correspondent of The New York Times feels that an affirmative answer is more than likely and that no distinction can be made in favor of Finland. Such a distinction must clearly be a temptation to both the British and American governments; to the former by virtue of popular warmth toward the fighting stalwarts of yesterday, and to the latter owing to this country's pro-Finnish leanings dating back to the "Little Finland Always Pays" period. Even now that the far greater issue of defeating Hitler is involved, the old warmth is cooling only by degrees and such explanations as President Risto Ryti of Finland recently gave to a New York Times correspondent will not simply be dismissed here. Mr. Ryti spoke of Finland's present battle as though it were a lone struggle entirely disconnected from the German assault on world democracy. Finland's soldiers, he said, held their own line under their own leadership; Finland was fighting the old problem of Russian aggression and her interest was solely in developing her "historic political and social order." She would stop at a strategic line of her own choosing.

As spokesman for a small country to which independence has always been the principal stake, Mr. Ryti begged the main issue. What he might have said is that but for Germany, Finnish soldiers could not be at the gates of Leningrad today, that Germany is Finland's only "defender" and will retain the right to continue that "defense" if the Axis is victorious. In short, Mr. Ryti's decision was to accept Hitler's New Order, and it is for the democracies to recognize his country's efforts as an aid in its establishment, and to act accordingly.

The Big Lie in Berlin

The Germans were never more cynical than they were in denying President Roosevelt's two charges against them: that they intend to dominate Latin America and that they are hostile to all forms of organized religious activity. As to Latin America, they have over and over again in recent years demonstrated their intentions. They have sent thousands of agents there, spent millions of dollars, fomented at least one war and two attempted revolutions. They have announced their plans in detail in secret Nazi doctrines which have fallen into anti-Nazi hands and been published.

In regard to religion, the case is equally plain. The Nazis' implacable hatred of Protestantism, Catholicism and the Jewish faith is written in big capitals on the pages of history. All other religions, as practised in Africa and Asia, they notoriously regard as the degenerate affectations of degenerate races. The denial of these attitudes and policies means nothing, even to the Nazis themselves, except as a further illustration of Hitler's policy: "Keep on lying; even if 95 percent is rejected, humanity is so gullible that the last 5 percent will stick."

It is a technique, incidentally, that we have lately seen exemplified in this country by The New York Daily News, Colonel Lindbergh and others, in the story that there would be no congressional elections in

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1942. Whoever else may believe that story, it is given no credit by America First, under whose auspices Lindbergh uttered it; for America First is busily working in support of its own candidates in those elections.

Charity and Appeasement

Another Red Cross ship, carrying a $1,000,000 cargo of drugs and children's clothing for unoccupied France, is reportedly to sail from this country very soon. The projected sailing, to which the British are said to have agreed, raises again the question of American relations with Vichy. A humanitarian people, Americans would undoubtedly like to feed all of Europe's hungry. They have tacitly decided, however, that to do so would simply be to aid the Nazis by weakening the British blockade. Only in the case of Vichy has a real exception been made. The reason is political, not humanitarian.

The State Department argues that charity for Vichy helps to strengthen faith in the United States in the unoccupied area and thus to check "collaboration." Perhaps it does, yet it is also clear that Hitler welcomes, rather than opposes, food shipments to unoccupied France. If he didn't approve, no such shipments would be permitted. It would seem up to the State Department to prove that the policy of appeasing Vichy has brought results. Up till now Vichy has yielded to Berlin in every crucial situation. Meanwhile it must seem strange to the peoples of the occupied European nations who are battling Hitler underground that this country reserves its aid for the area which is most quiescent under the Nazi lash.

A Poll of the Clergy

An organization known as the Catholic Laymen's Committee for Peace recently asked two questions of 34,616 Catholic priests in the United States The questions were (1) "Do you favor the United States engaging in a shooting war outside the Western Hemisphere?" and (2) "Are you in favor of the United States aiding the Communistic Russian government?" Replies came from 13,155 priests. Of these 91.5 percent said no to (1) and 90.5 percent no to (2).

The poll deeply troubled The Commonweal, the liberal Catholic weekly which supports the administration's foreign policy. Two of its editors undertook to analyze the result and reached conclusions that may hearten those who do not like to think that the Catholic hierarchy is overwhelmingly opposed to the American effort to stop Nazism and fascism. The Commonweal notes that only 38 percent of the priests queried replied. It says also that "the questions were weighted. No normal person is in favor of war. The question . . . is whether or not one prefers war or a likely victory for the Nazi armies. . . . It is one thing to be in favor of 'aiding the Communistic Russian government' and another to be in favor of aiding the Russians in their battle against the aggressor Nazi armies. . . . Because of the wording of the questions this poll has little meaning in any final, significant or objective sense." It is doubtful that isolationists will be impressed by those arguments, but the great majority of Americans will try hard to believe that The Commonweal has proved that the poll meant little or nothing. After all, as some wag once said, it would be possible to get 99 percent of all the males in America to vote in favor of head colds by asking "Would you kiss Hedy Lamarr at the risk of catching cold?"

A Correction

In a recent editorial paragraph (The New Republic, October 6) under the heading "War Aims That Matter" we stated that at a recent meeting of the British Labor Party's national executive a proposal was accepted for the nationalization of all banks and land, and national control over all land, air and sea transport. This report was based on a cable to The Chicago Daily News from their London correspondent, William H. Stoneman.

We find now that this report was at best premature. Mr. Stoneman's cable was based on information supplied to him by a member of the Recommendation Committee of the Labor Party who said that he was present at the meeting at which the policy was adopted. Mr. Stoneman has since been advised that while a majority approved the recommendation, the final decision was deferred because a few members wished to consider the matter at greater length.

Last Week

Louis, the barber of Bonwit Teller's department store in New York City, announced a new method of dressing women's hair, based on the Einstein theory as interpreted by Bonwit Teller's press agent, that "space cannot be confined or framed and that the line of action is continuous." It was the principle followed by more than one notable figure during the week. Senator Byrd, following his line, said he doubted that he could vote for the revision of the Neutrality Act, which he favored, because the President wouldn't revise his domestic policies, which he disliked. It is interesting, but not pleasant, to watch some Americans trying to determine whether they dislike Hitler, or the President of their own country, the more. . . . Mussolini went out on the balcony again and told his countrymen that the United States was going to be destroyed. . . . Japanese official sources continued to shoot with press releases telling us why we would have to back down. . . . The author of "Topics of the Times" in The New York Times continued to maintain that the Russians were not fighting as effectively in this war as in the last one. . . . And Senator Taft went on proving that the danger of war was simply a trick of FDR's. . . . Louis' talk of square and triangular curls made more sense.

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A Bold Stroke for Labor

THE EPISODE OF John L. Lewis and the captive mines has churned up again the old problem of what to do with labor troubles in the defense industries. The Lewis episode itself seems for the moment closed; Lewis backed down on the immediate question of a strike, and it is generally believed that the mediation panel will recommend a union shop for the captive mines. In the longer run Lewis will probably have achieved what he was aiming at—to put himself forward as the champion of militant labor against the moderation of the administration and its labor spokesmen, to capitalize on that in the coming CIO convention, to make trouble for the administration and undercut its prestige in matters of labor and defense.

While the episode is for the moment closed, its consequences go marching on. They are of three sorts, all of them related to the central malady of the growth of anti-labor feeling in a national emergency. In the first place, the employers who have always hated labor are now using the arrogance of Lewis' recent acts as the excuse for the suppression of labor as a whole.

Second, the American public mind, which even in the best of times has been suspicious and fearful of labor, has reached a dangerous pitch of hostility. This hostility has not lacked substance to feed upon. There is much in labor's house that needs mending. The racketeering in some of the AFL unions has been notorious, and the evidence of it disclosed in the current trial of Willie Bioff has only served to fortify the ordinary middle-class American in his fantastic conviction that all labor leaders are racketeers. The obstructionist tactics of the small Lewis group in the CIO have equally fortified the conviction in the middle-class mind that all labor leaders are against the defense program.

An article in the current issue of The Atlantic Monthly under the title "Will Congress Rescue the Unions?" says some sensible things despite its silly title; but the most sensible are contained in a list of questions at the end which in effect call for "publicity and accountability" in the management of trade unions. And, as a final item, it is notably ominous that the passages in President Roosevelt's Navy Day speech that were most loudly applauded were those in which he promised a firm stand against the obstructive tactics of a minority of labor. His remarks on the obstructionism of certain business men went unapplauded.

Third, we have Congress to reckon with—a Congress which contains, so far as the labor question is concerned, a deeply reactionary and vociferous minority. This is the Congress which has heard men like Hobbs of Alabama and Sumners of Texas call for the concentration camp and even the electric chair for strike leaders. A gesture of defiance such as John L. Lewis indulged in is their dream of heaven: it gives them exactly what they have always wanted to lend credence to their pathological hatred of labor and liberalism. We must now expect that even administration strategy in Congress will find it next to impossible to sidetrack the anti-labor legislation that will be proposed.

Thus America faces now the grave questions of how to deal with the labor hatred that has been drummed up over the past year, how to deal with the threats of hostile legislation, how to deal with the threats to the prestige of the National Defense Mediation Board and put teeth into its recommendations. Nor is our problem only a matter of public opinion. Racketeering, even if for the labor movement as a whole it is marginal, is still a reality. Jurisdictional strikes and wildcat strikes do far more harm than good. And the necessity of destroying Nazism is so immediate and profound that every other consideration must be revalued in its light. On the other hand it is equally true that if labor is suppressed in what it considers its rights, if it has to bear alone the heaviest burdens of sacrifice, it will never achieve that fighting faith without which the struggle against Nazism will be hopeless.

We do not believe that the solution lies in patchwork mending here and there, or in smart strategy in Congress. What is needed is a bold, imaginative stroke that will reach to the sources of the problem.

We start with the proposition that the responsible leaders in both labor and management recognize the gravity of the anti-labor sentiment and the extent to which it endangers the battle for production. Whatever proposals are made should therefore be made by them jointly with the President. We are not thinking of a public labor-management conference but of a quiet, deliberative set of consultations between the responsible leaders on both sides in which they will formulate a program. Such a program would not outlaw strikes nor would it freeze the status quo in labor relations. It would commit itself, first, to a housecleaning both of racketeering by labor and of labor suppression by employers. Second, it would recommend measures for publicity and accountability in both labor and management. Third, it would reaffirm the right to strike where labor has not yet achieved collective bargaining. Fourth, it would make a commitment to a self-policing by labor so as to avoid jurisdictional and outlaw strikes, and by management so as to avoid the disgraceful sort of primitivism shown by Mr. Hill of the Air Associates, which has led to army operation of the plant. Fifth, it would provide for a waiting period and mediation in those industries where collective bargaining has already been achieved. Sixth, it would commit itself to an acceptance of the recommendations of the NDMB.

If the President can announce this sort of agreement, coming from both sides in the controversy, he will have taken a long step toward labor peace. And the way will then be clear toward further pressure for the checks on war profits and for the labor-industry councils without which the problem will not be fully solved.

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Will the Farmers Remember?

FARMERS, who have been the underdog group in the national economy for the past twenty-two years, can be pardoned for a certain inattentiveness toward industrial and financial topdog voices which bid them to lie down and roll over, now that they are on their feet again. They recognize accents which drifted down to them with the command for quiet when they were prostrate at the bottom of the heap. The farm bloc took the offensive, a few days ago, when the House Agricultural Committee reported out a proposal to increase the loan rate on the five basic commodities—wheat, tobacco, corn, cotton and rice—to a flat 100 percent of parity. And it has just forced the House Banking Committee to abandon its intention of setting a ceiling of 110 percent of parity on farm prices, in its price-fixing measure. (The parity price of a farm commodity is the purchasing power which that amount of money had, in terms of non-farm commodities, from 1909 to 1914.)

But the Department of Agriculture, which farmers know is a friend, has been speaking also, quietly and insistently, saying, "Let's remember the last time." The last time was the glorious boom in farm prices from 1915 to 1920 and the lethal collapse within the following twelve months, the terrible deflation from which farmers did not actually recover until this year.

Farmers have their facts straight when they point out that farm prices up to now have not been disproportionately high. Practically all the advances in retail food prices and in costs of living have occurred since March, 1941. By August food was up 10 percent and living costs up 5 percent. But food was still the cheapest component of the cost of living, standing at 82.2 percent of the 1924-29 average as contrasted with 85.5 percent for all living costs combined. Since those figures were completed, prices of some of the leading products have indeed declined a little. During the past two years, retail food prices have not increased nearly so fast as the average earnings of employed city workers. The farmer is in the clear but he is not ahead.

Now what? To reason ahead, it is necessary to look backward. In 1915, ships began to go down at sea, the Allies, caught with unfilled warehouses, began to clamor for food. Presently the United States was in the war, with a wartime demand for food, food for a mass army abroad, food to replace food that German torpedoes were feeding to fishes. Between 1915 and 1920, prices received by farmers for their products rose more than 140 percent. Then they crashed. Farm income per capita was more than one and a half times greater from 1915 to 1920 than it was at the pre-war level. Non-farm income per capita was about 75 percent greater during those inflation years. But when farm income hit bottom, in 1932, it was only half what it was at the start of the boom, whereas non-farm income was still 25 percent above the pre-war level, even at the pit of the depression.

No farmer wishes to go through that again. Since his prices are today about what they were in 1916, it can readily be understood why the Department of Agriculture, which has worked so valiantly for years to get American farms free of the debris and debt of that disaster, is begging the farmer to open his eyes to the danger of inflation. The parallel between agricultural price movements in this war and the last one is too close for comfort. That of 1939 matches that of 1914, that of 1940 matches that of 1915.

In the last war non-agricultural prices gained more sharply in the first year than they did this time. To date in this war, they have advanced only a little more than 11 points, as compared with 26 points in the corresponding period twenty-five years ago. That has given the farmer an advantage up to now, but soon he will have to dig deeper into his pocket for the things he must buy. The sooner prices are stabilized the more he will gain. The sharper the inflation, the more he will ultimately lose.

The Banking Committee's original intention of putting a ceiling of 110 percent of parity on farm prices was more than generous, permitting, as it would have done, a further rise of perhaps 20 percent in food prices. The committee now has merely named that as the minimum; setting a ceiling will be postponed until prices have skyrocketed, no one knows how far. The proposal to increase the loan rate on the basic commodities is also an outright inflationary measure. Large reserve supplies of wheat, tobacco, corn, cotton and rice are in storage. Production of them is being curtailed. An increase in the price of corn will result in a jump in the prices of meats, dairy and poultry products. The mere possibility of such legislation may cause new speculative advances in commodity markets.

The thought of a whale of a quick profit, as once before, is enticing to the farmer. But it would be the part of self-interest for him to remember what happened to his shirt in that last wild poker game.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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"Dear Senator La Follette"

DEAR SENATOR LA FOLLETTE: You have spoken in a great and historic debate. You stood out from Nye, Clark, Wheeler and others who have cheapened this hour by their smallness and reliance upon personal abuse, because you clearly said what you believed to be right. You tried to reconcile your position with your humanitarian liberal character, and for that reason your failure was particularly tragic to those of us who have admired you.

As you spoke, beneath a hostile gallery, to an indifferent Senate, you must have thought of the first Robert La Follette standing on the same floor twenty-five years ago, a lonely and defiant figure blocking the road to war. He fought for three days to deliver his speech upon the arming of American merchant ships, and when he failed he brought the bill and the session down with him. You must have remembered the slander poured upon him as you rose to oppose another armed-ship bill and, knowing you, you must have rejoiced in facing it.

Throughout your speech, the comparison must have dominated your thoughts. You spoke of the "deadly parallel." You said, "the two main premises upon which the people of this country have been urged to go to war by the war party are: first, to fight for foreign trade and free markets; second, to avert a foreign invasion—the bugaboo which is used to frighten many of our people." Those may have been the issues in 1917; but they are not the issues today. You failed, Senator, because the deadly parallel does not exist. The real issue, and you could not face it, is a moral issue which cannot be denied.

Senator, you said, "I do not want to see the war party bring some form of fascism to power in America by taking this nation into an overseas war." You implied that the repeal of the Neutrality Act was, itself, a step toward fascism.

You know, Senator, that your charge is utterly false. You know that the President has full power today to arm American merchantmen and send them into belligerent zones without seeking further authority from Congress. He has full power to arm our ships because they carry government-owned cargoes, under Lease-Lend, which are also exempt. He has the further power to use other naval vessels in any manner necessary to secure our defense. And, if he wishes, he may render the restrictions of the Neutrality Act null and void by declaring, under the terms of the Act itself, that the Act can no longer "promote the security or preserve the peace of the United States." For, clearly, it cannot do these things today.

The President asked Congress to repeal Section 2 and Section 6 of the Act simply because he wished Congress to confirm the wisdom of every measure of foreign policy undertaken by the government.

You suggested, Senator, in your speech, that arming of merchant vessels had not been initiated by the United States Navy; Senator Taft, who preceded you, said, "It is very doubtful whether it will save any merchant ship or whether it will do any good to the British."

But you remember, Senator, that two weeks before you spoke, Admiral Stark told a House committee that the arming of merchant vessels would greatly reduce the losses suffered through dive bombing and submarine action. "A submarine," Admiral Stark said, "can attack an unarmed merchant vessel from the surface. Maneuvering openly on the surface of the sea, the submarine can stalk its prey, select its position and open fire with explosive shells instead of using torpedoes. If the merchant vessel is armed, however, the submarine must submerge or risk an exchange of fire. Submerged, the submarine must attack with torpedoes—an attack wherein the accuracy and quantity of its fire are materially lessened. Moreover, the speed of a submarine is considerably lower under water than on the surface. . . . Even the fastest modern submarine finds its speed reduced when under water to a rate as low as, or lower than, that of most merchant ships."

You asserted in your speech, Senator, that the arming of merchant ships would "probably involve greater losses of life" because submerged submarines will not rescue the crews of ships which they sink. That surely is an issue for the crews themselves to decide. The National Maritime Union, which represents most American seamen, has more than once passed resolutions demanding the arming of American merchant vessels and the total repeal of the Neutrality Act.

You went on, Senator, to say that the sending of American ships with American crews to belligerent ports, carrying implements of war, was contrary to international law because, presumably, it could not "promote the security or preserve the peace of the United States." The fact is that only if American ships, with American crews, are permitted to sail to belligerent ports will we have any security at all.

When war broke out, Senator, we had a merchant marine of 8,000,000 tons. Since then, 1,300,000 tons of merchant vessels have been transferred to the British. In contrast to our present merchant marine of less than 6,000,000 tons, we have 10,000,000 tons of new shipping under construction. Three ships are being launched every week in November and, by 1943, two new ships will be coming off the ways every day. These

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ships, Senator, are our protectors, holding the front line 3,000 miles from our own shores in Europe and Asia.

Who do you suppose, Senator, is going to man these ships? The few Danes and Norwegians who are sailing our ships under the Panamanian flag, and going down with them off the coast of Iceland? There were never more than 9,000 foreign seamen in America, and today there are none who are unemployed.

Are the British to man them? It is true that 30,000 of Britain's 230,000 seamen were unemployed when war was declared. But since then, Britain has lost 41,000 men in the Atlantic. You know the rule of the convoys, Senator, that no merchant ship may stop to rescue survivors from the sea.

Britain today, Senator, is critically short of seamen. On August 22, A. V. Alexander, the First Lord of the Admiralty, spoke of the new recruits to the British navy that came from the conquered countries of Europe. "These first-rate seamen," he said, "were most welcome at a time when we had taken up every seaman of our own who was not essential to the Maritime Service and the fisheries, and we needed many more."

Every new merchant vessel of the Maritime Commission needs a trained crew of fifty-five men. The British cannot supply these men; only America can.

Thanks to the Neutrality Act, which you say has protected us, Senator, 7,000 of our 74,000 trained seamen have left the sea to seek other jobs in the last three years. The Maritime Commission has undertaken to train new men, and at the moment, in four of its training schools, 2,500 men are taking courses of six months to a year to become able seamen. Twenty-five hundred men, Senator, are nothing, as you know. But what is the Maritime Commission to do so long as the Neutrality Act prohibits the men it trains from manning new ships? In 1918, our merchant marine was 200,000 men strong. The Shipping Board declared that that was the minimum number required for our security. Do you seriously suggest, Senator, that we build 10,000,000 tons of new shipping within the next two years and then, in the name of security, keep our labor force of seamen to 60,000 men because we deny ourselves the right to man our own ships?

You spoke today, Senator, as if the Neutrality Act were a living force which should be rigidly applied in the interests of our safety. But you know that it has not been applied to Russia. And you have not protested. What if Japan should declare war upon Britain and the Dutch East Indies? Should we then shut ourselves off from the ports of the Far East, too? William Yandell Elliot, in charge of stock piles at the OPM, told the Senate, as you know, that we could not continue our defense production without importing chromite, tungsten, rubber, tin, manila fiber, palm oil, mica and many other materials that come from Far Eastern ports. "We are threatened in our whole defense program," Elliot said, in a later speech, "if we fail to preserve the freedom of the seas, which means the freedom to import our defense materials."

There is one argument alone in your speech, Senator, which remains unanswered. It is the last weapon of the appeasers and you used it fully: the weapon of defeatism. "The war party overlooks," you said, "the economic decline of the British Empire. . . . The war party overlooks the increased difficulty of defending small nations. . . . The war party overlooks the size of the Axis armies. . . . The war party overlooks the possibility of a separate peace upon the part of the nations we are asked to join in war." (Senator Nye made the point somewhat more concisely. "Why back a dead horse?" he asked, speaking of our aid to the people of Britain.) You carried your defeatism to the point of preparing America for the victory of Hitler. "I am firmly convinced," you said, "that America will be able to compete successfully with a united Europe. This opinion is shared by many of our most prominent business men . . . but even if we were not able to compete, only five percent of our economy would be directly affected adversely." Is it to the level of these mean words, Senator, that the fighting La Follette tradition has fallen?

It is—and no single instance can better illustrate the profound contrast between this war and the last, than the way in which the pacifist tradition has sunk from the leadership of a progressive movement in 1916 to the tail end of reaction in 1941. Many people believe, Senator, that your own brother, who also claims the progressive inheritance, sees himself as the Führer of the fascist party that America First is rapidly becoming. They say that the task which he assumes at America First meetings is to outline the social program on which such a movement might seize power. When your father rose to speak in 1916, the grandest group in the Senate, George Norris and the Bryanites, stood behind him. But anti-Semitism, bitter reaction and outright fascism are the influences which surround you today.

I think, Senator, that you must reassure yourself by hoping that one day the uncertainty of your position will be vindicated. The first Robert La Follette did the same. He said in his greatest speech, following President Wilson's war message: "There is always lodged and always will be, thank the God above us, power in the people supreme. Sometimes it sleeps, sometimes it sleeps the sleep of death; but, sir, the sovereign power of the people never dies. . . . There will come an awakening. . . . It will be as certain and as inevitable as the return of the tides, and as resistless, too."

We have slept, Senator, while nation after nation went down to gain time for us to awaken. At last the time of our awakening has come.

MICHAEL STRAIGHT

Washington

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A Second Front Is Possible

THE VIOLENT DISCUSSION now raging in Britain about the establishment of a second front, poses the most crucial question of Allied strategy: should Britain take the initiative against Hitler; should she decide to launch an invasion of the Continent, thus making a campaign on land part of her war strategy?

Those in favor of an invasion voice the conscience of the British people. From a military point of view also they are right to demand a decision to invade, and in their contention that the present situation demands taking a risk. But their military arguments as a whole are not convincing, because they are too vague and disparate. During a debate in the House of Commons Colonel Wedgwood demanded isolated raids in the West, Philip Noel-Baker called for a British Expeditionary Force for the eastern front, and Mr. King-Hall favored a thrust against Italy.

And those who are opposed to the second-front strategy cannot come to terms either. One group tries to avoid a definite stand, expressing itself against "strategic improvisations" (Eden) and quoting Churchill to support this view. Others do not reject the invasion idea in principle, but they do reject it at the present moment because of technical and tactical difficulties (Lord Moyne, Secretary for the Colonies, in the House of Lords). Still others oppose a land war, including an invasion, outright, declaring it to be none of Britain's business and outside of Britain's strategic tasks, which should, in their opinion, be confined to a war at sea and in the air. Political considerations of a few conservative and anti-Russian Britishers also play their part, though this is not openly admitted.

It must be stated at the outset that British intervention on land is required within the framework of the war of coalition, in addition to the front in the east. It is not an isolated British campaign that is required, not a British-German duel. Today a British invasion of the Continent would have a completely different meaning, would aim at different objectives and would have much better chances than the abortive campaigns in Norway and the Balkans. What is needed today is limited British action on the European continent, at a moment when the German forces are almost completely tied up in the east. The Russo-German war has afforded Britain a breathing spell. For the time being the menace of invasion is banished, nor can the Luftwaffe carry out any mass attacks against Britain. Yet Britain has failed to take an independent military initiative and valuable time has been lost.

This breathing spell does not mean that British action has become needless. It means only that the necessity has been postponed for a time, and that ultimately Britain will be forced to act under much more unfavorable conditions. Should the Soviet Union lose the Donets Basin—and with it half of its raw-material resources—the potential offensive power of the Red Army would be substantially reduced while Anglo-American aid to Russia would have to grow in proportion. Effective Anglo-American action in the present phase of the Russo-German war would not only restrict the chances of the German offensives in the east, but would also afford Great Britain and the United States much better opportunities in the future. Not only a moral duty is at stake; the very interests of British defense are in the balance. For if the successes on the eastern front should enable the Third Reich to hurl some two million men against Western Europe, Britain would again face the threat of an invasion.

The present British discussion still revolves around the old question of whether Germany can be crushed by a sea war or an air war alone, or by any combination of the two. General Wavell gave the answer in an interview in The New York Times in July, 1941, when he said: "If this war is to be won properly, it has to be won *in Europe*. And *in Germany*. The Germans must be beaten on their own soil, exactly as Napoleon was beaten." This answer is of vital concern to the United States. Today traditional Anglo-American strategy is undergoing a revolution. The question is not whether Britain can avoid waging a large-scale war on land. The question is whether Britain—and the United States—will conduct the great land war in conjunction with the Soviet Union, utilizing all the possibilities afforded them by the scope of the Russian front; or whether, as a result of the present passive attitude, they will later have to shoulder the entire burden of a war on land.

All the possibilities of British intervention must be examined from this angle. The chances of a British Expeditionary Force, organized for the defense of the Caucasus or the Don line, are small. The Red Army does not lack reserves. It needs no foreign effectives, merely offensive weapons. One can hardly imagine Britain sending more than five to ten infantry divisions to the Russian front; the figure usually given is even lower. The bulk of Britain's Middle Eastern reserves consist of Indian troops and it is doubtful whether they have sufficient training and equipment. On the Russian front the war is not a colonial war, it is a great Continental campaign against the powerful German war machine. A British Expeditionary Force on the Russian front would be limited both in numbers and in material. At best it might raise the number of German casualties by some tens of thousands. And it will in any event be limited in strategic effectiveness by the war theatre itself. It would be unable to open up a new front against the

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Third Reich. Germany would continue to conduct war on but one front, while the Red Army might be strengthened at the rate of only about two percent. The problem of an Anglo-Russian war of coalition, the problem of a war on two fronts against the Third Reich, would not be solved. However, a British Expeditionary Force on the eastern front would still be preferable to complete aloofness.

The war of coalition confronts Britain with a very different task: the task is to strike at the enemy not at the point where his major forces are concentrated, but at his weakest and most sensitive spot. The strategic effectiveness of troops in a war of coalition is determined by the choice of direction. Despite all political and national ferment, all of Western and Southern Europe has today become a safety zone for Germany, a peaceful hinterland, in a military sense. But this entire region, from Norway across France to Greece, is being gradually denuded of troops. All combat forces and all available arms reserves have been hurled into the eastern front. The German army usually starts its major offensives with a maximum of effort. Thus one might assume that it cannot surpass the offensive effort made in the super-battle of Smolensk, in the second half of July. But the masses of troops and offensive weapons used in the offensives against Moscow and the Donets Basin greatly exceed the previous assaults. In part these resources consist of strategic reserves held back for the decisive battle; in part the troops and offensive material came from the occupied territories. Russian dispatches declare that Germany is now using up the reserves of arms looted from the occupied regions: Czech and French tanks and guns, Polish planes, etc. This shows to what extent German arms reserves have been withdrawn from the rear and from the west and how the western occupation troops have been thinned out.

Today British intervention has better possibilities than ever before. The aim should not be only to impose the heaviest possible losses. It should be to cause disruption of the German war machine between west and east. Indeed, Britain must disorganize the German interior line between two fronts. She must tie up the major part of the enemy forces and create additional difficulties. And she ought to be able to win over the largest possible number of new allies on the new front.

The Third Reich has already occupied the Atlantic seaboard of Europe, which German troops control from the North Cape down to the Bay of Biscay. Here German army movements would amount to operations within occupied territory. In Southwestern Europe, on the coasts of the Mediterranean, the situation is different. Spain and unoccupied France would confront Hitler with new and heavy tasks. Together with Portugal, these regions possess a population of forty millions. Any intervention on the part of Britain and the United States in this direction would be bound to result in a German attempt at occupation, with a lengthening of the German lines of communication, unfavorable transport and supply conditions, and with all the difficulties inherent in a new campaign of occupation. Thus the possibility would arise of tying up far greater forces than those needed merely to engage invading troops. A German attempt to occupy all of France and Spain would necessarily result in sabotage and revolt on a large scale. In such circumstances, German control over the Atlantic seaboard from Norway to western France would have to be relaxed.

The military prerequisite for such a situation is Anglo-Saxon control of the Mediterranean and of North Africa. Anglo-American naval coöperation is the task of the hour. The continental power of the Third Reich cannot be beaten on the seas, but it can be encircled from the sea; the surrounding waters, especially the Mediterranean, can be transformed into bases for naval operations against the Third Reich. Once Britain and the United States establish naval hegemony in the Mediterranean, once they transform the Mediterranean and North Africa into a base for naval and land operations, Germany will be unable to hold Southwestern Europe. The Italian navy and the German air force in the Mediterranean have been weakened; Germany has nothing more than a bridgehead on the African coast of the Mediterranean, in Libya.

An active strategy requires an active policy. The so-called neutrality of Pétain and Franco Spain—a myth from which Germany alone profits—can no longer be taken seriously. Should the Anglo-American bloc propound as part of its program of action the liberation from the Axis of France and Spain, the restoration of the French and Spanish republics and immediate economic aid to these two countries, it will be able to count on irrepressible support from France and Spain. In her war against Napoleon Britain was able to combine the fight against the plans of hegemony by a continental power with military support to Spain in her fight for independence. This story must be repeated. As for France, her situation today is even more comparable to that of Spain during the Napoleonic Wars.

These parallels to the War of 1812 are striking. But at that time the Anglo-Russian Alliance was far ahead of its present-day successor both in strategic coördination and in initiative. At that time Britain had a *front in Europe:* in Spain. In Wellington Kutusov had an ally in the land war. The Anglo-Russian War of 1812 was a *war on two fronts.* Above all, years before at Trafalgar Britain had won the Mediterranean. Two fronts and control of the Mediterranean are historical necessities, strategic laws in the fight against the continental power that seeks to rule Europe. Today the Anglo-American democracies need the naval strategy of a Nelson and the land strategy of a Wellington.

MAX WERNER

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Negro Morale

THROUGHOUT THE URBAN AREAS of the country, the Negro communities are seething with resentment, expressed in the utterances of ordinarily conservative Negro leaders, and in the Negro press and periodicals. "Where there was once tolerance and acceptance of a position believed to be gradually changing for the better, now the Negro is showing a 'democratic upsurge of rebellion,' bordering on open hostility," says Harlem's Amsterdam-Star News.

This unrest has recently been brought to a head by twin factors which have come to the surface in the national emergency but whose roots lie deep in American life: the treatment of Negro members of the army and the frustration Negroes feel at being barred from jobs in the defense industries.

Negro newspapers describe the army situation as bad indeed. They cite as examples, race riots at Fort Oswego; fighting at Camp Davis; discrimination at Fort Devens; jim-crow conditions at Camps Blanding and Lee; stabbings at Fort Huachuca; killings at Fort Bragg; and the edict "not to shake a nigger's hand" at Camp Upton.

Nearly every day there are reports of Negroes going AWOL, particularly those stationed in Southern camps. For instance, The New York Times carried a story on August 18, 1941, that, following friction with the white population, forty-three Negroes of the Ninety-fourth Engineers (labor) Battalion from Chicago and Detroit departed from the maneuver area near Gurdon, Arkansas. In explaining the "racial difficulties" involved, Major Gen. Robert C. Richardson Jr., white, said that ". . . some of these Northern Negroes, not understanding the attitude of the Southerner, and apparently to avoid further trouble, left their command."

This is too pat an answer. It ignores the undercurrent of feeling among all Negroes that comes to the surface at the least provocation; and it slides over the fact that the Northern Negro knows the Southern viewpoint all too well. A Negro who has lived in the freer atmosphere of the North and become aware of his political rights will not relinquish them or put up with abuse because he happens to be in the South. That he wears the uniform of the United States Army increases his self-respect.

To some Southerners such a man is a dangerous "nigger" who must be made to "know his place"—with violence and terror, if necessary. The prejudiced Southerner refuses to accord even the ordinary decencies to the Negro—uniform or no uniform—and is not impressed by the statements of administration leaders about extending democracy to the oppressed. In his view, democracy is not a way of life for all, but a luxury for better-class white people only.

The sharply differing views of the Northern Negro and the prejudiced white Southerner are now meeting head-on. This was revealed in the flare-up at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the result of an affray in which a Negro soldier and a white military policeman were killed. In this instance, however, the killing of the white MP was the act of a Southern Negro whose resentment against injustice mounted to a desperate thrust for human dignity.

According to the best available accounts, this soldier, Ned Turman, voiced objections to an attack on a fellow Negro soldier and was cracked over the head with a club by a white MP. In wrestling to protect himself, the Negro managed to snatch his assailant's gun. Brandishing it, he stepped back and cried: "I'm going to break up you MP's beating us colored soldiers!" And with that, he fired the fatal shot. He was immediately shot to death by another white MP, who also had participated in the fracas. After the shooting, whole companies not involved in the affair—their Negro officers included—were forced to stand all night with their hands above their heads while armed military policemen patroled the camp.

The daily newspapers, with the exception of New York's PM, maintained a silence that made the situation no less real. Few were the voices of white people protesting against such treatment of members of the country's army. Similar acts committed by Nazis outrage American opinion and result in columns and columns of newspaper comment.

Negroes, however, were outspoken about the affair to the point of being inflammatory. George S. Schuyler, a well known commentator who has few illusions about his race and its problems, spoke of the "racial hatred, official cowardice and hypocrisy" rampant in the "new so-called people's army," and held that "every American, whose soul was not corroded by Negrophobia should be enraged." After condemning "Hitlerism at Home," The Pittsburgh Courier, largest-selling Negro newspaper in the country, went on to say editorially that "Nothing short of the most drastic punishment of officers and enlisted men among the white military police will satisfy a justifiably aroused Negro people." The equally influential Baltimore Afro-American, in calling for mass action, observed that "One individual marching up and down Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House denouncing race prejudice is arrested as a crank. Ten thousand persons get respectful attention. When great batches of drafted men *desert* rather than serve in the army down in Dixie, the War Department will then do something."

In a typical letter to the editor of PM, a Negro man-in-the-street wrote: "When I read these things I

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am forced to wonder just how far removed is this brand of democracy that we practise from fascism, Nazism and barbarism. . . . Lest someone chide me for not being loyal, may I say that I am as loyal as America permits me to be."—"Negroes have been patient, loyal and patriotic," The Amsterdam-Star News remarked editorially, "but they will not be destroyed!"

The other most important cause for unrest in the Negro population is the lack of employment in the defense industries. In a statement to the President, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People argued that "equitable employment of minority racial groups in defense industries was more than an issue of racial policy." When the administration appointed a Negro, Dr. Robert C. Weaver, to the Advisory Commission to the Council of National Defense, and appointed Judge William H. Hastie, a Negro, Civilian Aide to the Secretary of War, for the purpose of integrating Negroes into the defense program, The Crisis, official organ of the NAACP, held that these acts "indicated a growing realization that colored Americans must be given the serious consideration they demand."

It soon became apparent, however, that the White House statement—"It is the policy of the War Department that the services of Negroes will be utilized on a fair and equitable basis"—was not taken literally by those responsible for carrying it out. No real effort was made to utilize the vast reservoir of Negro labor.

To procure jobs in the defense industries, A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, called upon Negroes, in May, 1941, to "march onto Washington." "The administration leaders in Washington," he told the writer at that time, "will never give the Negro justice until they see masses —ten, twenty, fifty thousand Negroes on the White House lawn!" The Negro public agreed, and responded immediately. Both the NAACP and the National Negro Congress supported the march actively. Walter White brought his influence and prestige to the movement. Thousands of dollars were spent. Press and pulpit played decisive roles in building up sentiment. The Pullman Porters became couriers, carrying the word to Negro communities throughout the country.

The march was scheduled to take place on July 1, 1941. A demonstration involving upwards of fifty thousand Negroes in the nation's capital was filled with danger, and the administration recognized its gravity. Four days before the appointed day, Randolph was summoned to Washington. The administration leaders made new pledges and persuaded him to call off the march. A few days later President Roosevelt, in a public statement, broadly condemned racial intolerance and urged the country to drop its bars against the employment of racial minorities.

The masses of Negroes were bewildered by the sudden turn of events; indeed, many of Randolph's own colleagues were disgruntled by the easy conclusion of the affair. Nothing tangible had been gained, they felt. The recent incidents at the army camps and the chronic, acute unemployment bear them out. Randolph lost much prestige as a leader. And Negroes now appear to be taking the situation into their own hands and stampeding their leaders, with the result that newer and younger men now are taking the helm. The Negro public is particularly critical in the Eastern urban areas.

Naïve attempts to mollify the natural resentment of Negroes have served only to aggravate the problems. Recently the War Department, noticing the gathering of ominous clouds, gave a forty-five-minute radio broadcast over a nationwide hook-up of NBC, featuring the Negro soldier. Officials in the War Department hoped this would soothe the wounded feelings of the race. Unhappily, the program missed fire. In reporting the event, The Chicago Defender, leading Midwestern Negro weekly, headlined its story, "Soft Soap." The Pittsburgh Courier called the affair a "flop." Roy Wilkins, editor of The Crisis, writing in The Amsterdam-Star News, said he tore up his studio admission tickets. "Who wants to fight," he wrote, "for the kind of 'democracy' embodied in the curses, the hair-trigger pistols and the clubs of Negro-hating hoodlums in the uniforms of military police?"

What Negroes wanted to hear, one paper commented icily, was not how racial separatism was being perpetuated in the army as outlined by Undersecretary of War Patterson, principal speaker on the radio program; nor did they need him to remind them that they were being compelled to defend a democracy almost nonexistent for most of them in many parts of the country. What they did want to hear was what the War Department was doing to put into practice the democracy preached by the administration. "Instead," said The Courier, "Negroes heard the old familiar platitudes, a eulogy of black soldiers who had won honors fighting for democracy, a little tap dancing and what amounted to praise of a jim-crow system that mocks the word democracy."

Negroes may differ among themselves on minor issues concerned with day-to-day living, but on the question of their rights—political, economic and moral —and the right to integration in American life, they present an almost solid bloc. For, as individuals, they face common problems, regardless of status. They have learned on many bitter occasions that no individual can rise far above the condition of the race; not even the most distinguished. Paul Robeson, the concert artist, and Big Jim, the stevedore, both feel the lash of prejudice.

This curious characteristic of American life has caused the manifestation of a Negro group consciousness and provided the economic basis for a feeling of solidarity among its members. Thus, the more fortunate members of the race have been forced into what

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might be called a united front with the masses. And they have been compelled by the very nature of this position into articulating the aspirations and demands of the underprivileged. Today, in the present national emergency, these demands are for a fair share of the jobs in the defense industries and for the protection of the Negro soldier against the violent prejudice of both the white civil and military populations throughout the country.

To dismiss this situation—a formidable bar to national unity—as only the inevitable discontent of a rapidly progressing, educated group of the race, is to be blind to the true picture. Casually to term the protests fulminations of "agitators" is to impute false motives to these people. The question of liberty, equality and the pursuit of happiness in a democracy is the point at issue, and the Negro is reacting in a positive way to the high-minded slogans currently heard.

Negroes—driven into the category of second-class citizens—feel, with logic on their side, that the American people should expend some of their crusading zeal within the borders of the United States. ROI OTTLEY

War Profits

III. *Competition in Aluminum*

FEW INDUSTRIES have been more scrambled by the war than the aluminum industry. From 1888 to 1940, all the aluminum produced in this country was produced by the Aluminum Company of America. In 1940 the Reynolds Metals Company, with money borrowed from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, built an aluminum plant which turned out its first batch of ingots in May, 1941. Now a much more formidable competitor has appeared. The United States Government, acting through the Defense Plants Corporation (a branch of the RFC), is to build seven aluminum plants which will have a capacity not much smaller than the capacity of Alcoa itself.

Furthermore, the Defense Plants Corporation is not only paying for these new facilities but is also retaining ownership of them. To be sure, the factories will be leased and operated by private corporations, and three of the seven will be managed by Alcoa itself. Nevertheless, war expansion will about triple our ability to make aluminum. And the two great post-war producers should be the Aluminum Company of America and the United States of America, with about 40 percent of the total capacity owned by the United States. Thus a fifty-year monopoly in the production of what is now a basic metal is in the course of becoming extinct.

There is nothing to compel the government to stay in the aluminum business when the present crisis is over. But the terms of the contracts which are being negotiated between the Defense Plants Corporation and the private operators suggest that the new plants are intended for long-term use. The five private corporations (Aluminum Company of America, Reynolds Metals, Bohn Aluminum and Brass, Union Carbide and Carbon, and Olin Corporation will each sign a five-year lease on the DPC properties. They will get, as a management fee, 15 percent of whatever profit may be made by the plants they operate. All plants must be run at the same ratio of production to capacity. If the output should fall below 40 percent of capacity, either the Defense Plants Corporation or the private operator can cancel the lease. But if a lease is canceled by a private operator, the DPC is free to get another corporation to run the plant. The DPC may also get a new operator if the current operator sells (or tries to sell) aluminum at "too high" a price. And the DPC has the right to decide at what figure a "too high" price exists. This final provision permits the government to establish the price of aluminum and therefore to control the aluminum industry.

This government control may never be exerted, or may never be exerted in a manner harmful to the profits of Alcoa. It is true that the company is not popular with the Roosevelt administration. Thurman Arnold has just lost (in a federal court) an anti-trust suit which was intended to divide this company into two or more theoretically independent parts. On the other hand, Alcoa is not altogether without friends in Washington; it will operate more than half of the government-owned capacity and has begun work on the DPC factories while contracts are still pending with the other potential lessees. Besides, there may at some future date be a Republican administration, and such an administration would presumably get out of the aluminum business in the shortest possible time. So it may be too early to sell the Aluminum Company of America short. Yet the aluminum industry should soon be partly owned and entirely controlled by the public. And this condition can continue for as long as the representatives of the public desire.

The transformation of the aluminum industry results not only from the Second World War, but from the wartime importance of aircraft, particularly aircraft of the flying-fortress type. The basic material in aircraft production is an aluminum alloy and, what with the large number and the short life of military planes, the wartime demand for aluminum is almost impossible to fill. In 1940, Alcoa began its own private expan-

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sion program, designed to increase its capacity from about 550,000,000 pounds of aluminum per year to about 750,000,000 pounds per year. This program, which will cost upwards of $150,000,000, is being paid for entirely by Alcoa and is altogether independent of the DPC construction.

While Alcoa was increasing its ability to produce aluminum, the Reynolds Metals Company was (as I have already said) getting itself into the aluminum-producing business. Reynolds had previously manufactured all kinds of foil (aluminum, tin, lead, zinc and composition), used chiefly as wrappers for cigarettes, chewing-gum and other commodities, mostly edible. But, appreciating the wartime demand for aluminum and assisted by the RFC, Reynolds decided to supply Alcoa with its first ingot-producing competitor. The Reynolds plant turned out about 5,000,000 pounds of aluminum in June, 1941, and should be producing at the rate of 100,000,000 pounds per annum by the end of the present year.

Thus the aluminum industry, on its own responsibility and with its own money (since Reynolds will eventually have to repay its RFC loan) increased its pre-war capacity by 54 percent, at a time when the steel industry was protesting that the existing steel capacity was adequate for any possible demand on it. The aluminum industry also stepped up its capacity to almost three times the United States consumption (327,000,000 pounds) in 1939, the last "normal," or relatively normal, year.

But even 300,000,000 pounds of new capacity was not enough to meet the needs of the defense program. In July, 1941, the OPM finally began to worry about the aluminum supply, hence the DPC's arrival in the aluminum field. Once in, however, the government did not hesitate to get in all over. The DPC plants will have an annual capacity of 600,000,000 pounds—considerably more than Alcoa's capacity at the outbreak of the war. Of this capacity, 340,000,000 pounds will be operated by Alcoa; 100,000,000 pounds by Reynolds; 70,000,000 pounds by Bohn Aluminum and Brass; 60,000,000 pounds by Union Carbide and Carbon; and 30,000,000 pounds by Olin Corporation. When all the present construction plans are completed, the United States aluminum capacity will be about 1,450,000,000 pounds a year.

Of the private operators, Alcoa presumably needs no introduction and the Reynolds company has already been introduced. Bohn Aluminum and Brass, whose president, Charles Bohn, was once an Alcoa man, has been perhaps Alcoa's most vigorous competitor. It does not fabricate nearly so many aluminum products as are fabricated by Alcoa, but where the two companies are competitive, Bohn gives his larger rival a good run for its money. The Bohn company specializes in pistons and bearings; about 40 percent of its peacetime output goes to automobile manufacturers, with Henry Ford its largest customer. Current business, however, is mostly in ammunition and in parts for plane engines. Bohn made $1,440,000 in 1940 and $817,000 in the first six months of 1941, the half-year profit being figured after putting aside about $1,000,000 for the federal income tax. The company will almost certainly continue as a post-war aluminum producer, if only for the sake of controlling its own raw-material supply.

Union Carbide and Carbon is a chemical rather than a metal company. But many of its products are, like aluminum, produced in electric furnaces and its plants (like Alcoa's plants) are built near ample sources of electric power. (Alcoa is the largest user of both TVA and Bonneville power.) Olin Corporation is a cartridge manufacturer and hardly seems to belong in the aluminum industry. But it is situated near Tacoma, Washington, and can also make aluminum with power from the Bonneville Dam. Union Carbide and Carbon and the Olin Corporation may not stay in the aluminum business when peace returns and the frost comes on the pumpkin, but Reynolds and Bohn are probably permanent factors in the aluminum-producing field.

So, from an *operating* standpoint, we will have the following aluminum producers with (when plants now on paper come into production) the following yearly capacities:

	Pounds
Aluminum Company of America	1,090,000,000
Reynolds Metals Company	200,000,000
Bohn Aluminum & Brass	70,000,000
Union Carbide and Carbon	60,000,000
Olin Corporation	30,000,000
Total capacity	1,450,000,000

But from an *ownership* standpoint, the industry will show the following division:

	Pounds
Aluminum Company of America	750,000,000
United States of America	600,000,000
Reynolds Metals Company	100,000,000
Total capacity	1,450,000,000

Remember that these aluminum figures are in *pounds* and not in *tons*. Even 1,450,000,000 pounds are only 725,000 tons, whereas the steel capacity, for instance, is about 84,000,000 tons, or about 116 times the aluminum capacity on a pound-for-pound basis. The aluminum industry is, relatively speaking, a small industry. That is why wartime expansion will have such a revolutionary effect on it. The government-owned aluminum plants are expected to cost somewhere between $300,000,000 and $400,000,000. Such an expenditure would hardly produce an appreciable increase in steel capacity. But it can turn the aluminum industry upside-down, inside-out and (from Alcoa's standpoint) wrong-side-to.

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Profits in the aluminum industry have been mostly the profits of Alcoa, and such profits, commonly substantial, have recently been spectacular. The following table shows Alcoa's net income (after all expenses, including taxes) for each of the past five years:

	Net Income	*Return on Invested Capital*
1936	$22,095,000	11.58
1937	27,795,000	14.98
1938	15,589,000	8.26
1939	37,370,000	18.28
1940	44,733,000	20.41

Considering that the 1929 net was $25,318,000, the company's recent record has been remarkably good. No quarterly or semi-annual reports are published, so what Alcoa is doing in 1941 is impossible to say and would be extremely unsafe to estimate. The company is among those which would pay a higher excess-profits tax on the invested-capital basis than on the average-earnings basis, as its exemption on the invested-capital basis is about $16,000,000, whereas its average 1936-39 earnings were $25,700,000. But Alcoa's profit before federal taxes is so much larger than its average earnings, and its capitalization ($230,000,000) is so small in relation to its profit that it is currently paying large income taxes on no matter what basis the tax is figured. In 1940, it paid about $40,000,000 in federal income taxes and is likely to pay a good deal more during the current year. But its net income in the early forties should be far above its net income in the later twenties.

The war crisis has created an opportunity for practising government ownership on a previously unknown scale. For the time being, everybody in the aluminum business should make money. But in a post-war world there may be a tremendous gap between the ability to produce aluminum and the ability to use it. Lower prices would increase consumption and Alcoa has already reduced its ingot-price from 21 cents a pound when the war began to 17 cents in September, 1941, and to 15 cents today. Aluminum is not now much more expensive than copper, but steel is still selling at two cents a pound and with such a figure aluminum can never hope to compete. Unless we continue to live in a militarized world and the aviation industry remains in its present swollen state, it is hard to see how a post-war aluminum industry could utilize more than from 25 percent to 30 percent of its plant.

For the comparatively small sum of $230,000,000—much less than will be spent on the DPC's aluminum plant—the government could reimburse the Aluminum Company of America's stockholders for all the money they have put into the aluminum business. Alcoa has monopolized aluminum production for a long time and its monopoly position has been accented by the fact that one family—the Mellons—owns about 33 percent of its stock. It is always difficult to tell which way a government cat will jump. But those who believe in government ownership, or who object to monopoly control, might now bestir themselves to see that the aluminum of the people falls as far as possible into the people's hands.

E. D. KENNEDY

Bombing Is a Quiet Business

A YEAR AGO YESTERDAY (September 7) I was spending the week-end with my publisher. We turned on the six o'clock news and heard the announcer say that London had been attacked by the German air force on a new scale and with a new degree of violence.

An irresistible impulse impelled those of us who lived in London to go back there that evening. And that evening there began the series of night raids which, if I'm not mistaken, continued for sixty nights in succession, with the exception of two nights which were foggy.

It was the first experience of the systematic bombing of one of the world capitals. And how extremely different the whole thing turned out to be from anything which anybody had foretold! We all knew the Wellsian forecast: Mr. Wells had even been good enough to show us a film of it. His and his fellow prophets' accounts were, no doubt, based on perfectly reasonable calculations. It was well known that if you dropped tons of high explosives on houses, the houses would fall down and the people in them be crushed and killed. Hence the apocalyptic picture—as in the film version of "The Shape of Things to Come"—of universal ruin, the disruption of civilized life, panic, followed by a reversion to the Dark Ages. Nothing of the sort happened. Why?

The original calculation was not at fault. When many tons of high explosives were dropped on houses, the houses did fall down and the people inside were duly crushed and killed. Why, then, did not the apocalyptic consequences follow? What was the error in the forecast? The error was one of scale. The foreseen consequences duly occurred when bombs struck houses; but not enough bombs struck enough of the houses of London to produce the apocalyptic consequences. That—and, "if we say it as shouldn't," a certain unexpected phlegm and steadiness in modern city dwellers, which left them almost unaffected if their own house was not actually hit—was the simple cause of the error. The prophets had not made their predictions sufficiently *quantitative*. They had not

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added up the number of houses in a modern world capital. They had not calculated the tonnage of bombs which could be dropped per night, the number of houses which would be destroyed by each ton of bombs, and divided the probable nightly rate of destruction into the total of houses to be destroyed.

As to the other factor—the psychological factor that a modern city population does not panic, almost literally, until and unless every house in the area has been hit—looking back on the experience, I suggest that we ought to make a closer analysis of what in actual fact makes us afraid. It is an extremely irrational business. Almost no one, I think, is frightened of the real danger; almost no one calculates that sooner or later a bomb may well hit the building in which he is. The physical reactions of fear are called up, almost universally, by loud noises and by these alone. And the very nicest thing about air raids, in my opinion, is their unexpected quiet.

There is, of course, a certain amount of noise some of the time. But all those descriptions of "deafening barrages," "an inferno of hideous din," "earsplitting concussions," etc., etc., which we used to read, and which you in America, I dare say, still read, are, in my experience, pure inventions. The correspondents simply get into the habit of writing them; but it is the clatter of their own typewriters, and not the bombs or the barrages, that is deafening them. At any rate, all through the autumn and winter of 1940-41 in London I never heard a raid which by the most extreme stretch of imagination could be called deafening. In patrolling the streets, as we used to do as ARP wardens, in pairs, there was never a moment in which I have known it in the least difficult to converse with my companion. This means that there was never anything approaching the volume of sound made by the New York elevated, for example. So New Yorkers, who can stand that, may be assured that they would think nothing of air raids; they would find them almost inaudible!

Naturally you hear one or two sharp cracks if you pass within fifty yards or so of an anti-aircraft battery. But this you seldom do. I can only remember doing so three or four times all last winter. I do remember one occasion in particular, however. It was about seven o'clock one evening. I wasn't on duty till eleven and I was going out to dinner with some friends at a restaurant. Sirens had sounded a couple of hours before, but there was no activity. Then I heard a plane droning up from the east. A few seconds later I heard someone calling out about twenty-five yards to my left, the other side of some railings, in a sort of stage military voice, "No. 1, ready"; then a more proletarian voice: "On target, sir." Then the military voice: "Fire!" And they did. A couple of yards of flame shot out from the barrel of the gun and lit up the surroundings (about to the extent and of the duration of a lightning flash) and revealed the owner of the military voice standing at a correctly rigid position between his guns. The noise was really sharp—it certainly made me jump. I stood watching while the battery fired a few rounds and then stopped—the plane flying on and being engaged by other batteries to the westward, which made only the familiar flickers and thuds to us. But none of the other passersby, in a fairly busy street, so much as paused. The buses and taxis were moving up and down the street. The last office workers were going home; people were going out to dinner. For a moment the juxtaposition of the everydayishness of it all, and the flashing, spitting, cracking battery, fired so very much "in anger," was genuinely bizarre. But such moments occur only once or twice in months of raiding.

That was by far the loudest noise I have ever heard in a raid. Bombs themselves make, as a rule, extraordinarily little noise when they detonate among city streets. I know it will sound incredible, but it is the case that nine bombs out of ten make more noise rushing and whistling through the air in their fall than they do when they explode. The biggest bomb that ever came my way fell about two hundred and fifty yards from where I was standing and destroyed several houses. But it made no more than a thud. (I may say that I was lying extremely flat in the gutter.) I was genuinely in doubt as to whether it had gone off or not, until I heard the tinkle (and, honestly, it usually sounds no more than a tinkle) of falling glass and masonry.

Another evening I was dining with Dick Plummer of The Daily Express in Simpson's Restaurant in the Strand when a small bomb made a direct hit on the building. We were on the ground floor and the bomb burst three or four floors up. It made a sharp bang, but nothing that you could possibly call deafening. Out of the tail of my eye I saw one of those vast piles of plates which they make in big restaurants do a perfect glissade on to the floor—without breaking one of them, as a matter of fact. The fifty-odd diners with one accord plunged under their tables. (This was not necessarily as silly as it sounds. I have seen even the flimsiest bit of head cover save people's lives when bits of ceiling have come down.) We all met, facing each other just under, instead of just above, the table tops, with some surprise. Nothing more happened. The ceiling didn't come down. So we emerged and went on with our dinners (we had to get new soup as a lot of dust had fallen into it). We had no idea that there had been a direct hit on the building. The lights didn't go out or anything disturbing of that sort. It was not till we tried to leave after dinner that we found that the front door of the restaurant was choked with debris, over which we had to climb.

This happened in the middle of last winter, when we'd all settled down to things. We were all much too scared to dine out in the first weeks of the blitz. Nor

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did we (I didn't in any case) ever cease to be scared. But boredom is, in the long run, an even stronger force than fear. And it was really too much never to see one's friends in the evening. So gradually we began to creep back to familiar restaurants, till soon the nightly siren made no particular difference in this respect.

I remember one evening, for instance, running from the bus stop by the Green Park Station, on the way to meet Bob Boothby at his flat in Pall Mall. A certain amount of shell fragments were coming down, and on those occasions we used to dodge from cover to cover. (I, for one, always had a warden's tin hat with me, on and off duty, too). This journey was well protected. There was first the arcade of the Ritz, and then the deep doorways of the clubs all the way down St. James's Street. I remember arriving extremely out of breath and persuading Bob that it would be quite far enough if we went just round the corner to the Carlton Grill.

I used to begin a warden's shift usually at about eleven each evening. On the nights when there were incidents in my sector (the ARP sectors are very small, just a few blocks, so there were incidents in any one sector on only a few occasions during the winter, you must remember), it was curious to go straight from normal, trivial social life to the sights, sounds and smells of a bombed area. But the truth is that it turns out to be only too easy to feel little or nothing at the sight of the death and mutilation caused by bombs. This is mainly, I think, because of the simple fact that it is so *dark*. You really see so little. Sights which, no doubt, would be rather apt to make you vomit if you came on them in broad daylight are rendered trivial and unreal when they are seen by the feeble, fitful light of pocket torches, through the blackness and dust fog of a bombing.

What, however, looking back on it all, are the lessons, if any, to be drawn from the first great aerial bombardment of a capital city? The prime conclusion is undoubtedly that there are many, many worse things in life than being bombed. Naturally the relatives of those who are killed pass through agonies of suffering —just as do the relatives of those who are killed in road accidents. And more people are killed each month in heavy raiding than in road accidents. But not incomparably more—four or five times as many per month in the very worst months so far. (All this summer we have been killing many more people on our roads than the Germans have been killing in raids: and you in America have been killing enormously more of yourselves, of course.) I am inclined to claim that London did achieve one thing last winter: never again will bombing be an unknown and unfaceable horror before the threat of which a free people must surrender. Given proper air and ground defenses, and proper ARP organization, even heavy and sustained bombing can be endured. And the sufferings which its endurance entails cannot even be compared to the sufferings which befall a free people if they surrender to the Nazis. Who in their senses could speak of the sufferings which Londoners endured last winter in the same breath with what unhappy Paris and her people endured and endure as a consequence of capitulation?

May we then conclude that the wholesale night bombing of great cities has been proved to be a failure? That it would be a waste of time for either the RAF or Germany to undertake a new "season" of this form of warfare this winter? Such a conclusion would be hasty. London and the other bombed cities of Britain endured and survived the bombings of last winter. But my own experience, for what it is worth, does *not* lead me to the conclusion that it is an inherently impossible task to night-bomb even the greatest city to destruction or capitulation. Change the proportions of the forces engaged last winter: decrease our defenses substantially; multiply by five (or perhaps a multiplier of ten would have been necessary) the weight of bombs which German pilots were able to drop; correct certain now obvious errors made by them in the selection of targets—and positive results might have been achieved.

Just *what* would happen if and when a great city was bombed beyond the point of endurance I cannot exactly envisage. No doubt people would panic. But, within fairly wide limits, this would not have any particular consequences. Such cases have been known already, and after the panic was over people have simply gone back to work again. However, if there was no work to go back to; if the factories and power stations and means of communication had been destroyed; if the water and food supplies had been interrupted, and stayed interrupted for weeks rather than days; if the civil-defense organization had broken down—well, then things might have begun to happen.

London JOHN STRACHEY

Telephone Wires in Winter

They sing as the burnt stars sing
And the flame-throated bird,
Wires from mouth to mouth,
Bearing the lovely wing
Of the human word.
Against the haunted blue of winter noon
Strung like the cold, thin arteries of song,
They can seem like death or serpents to a child,
They can seem like towers and a gong.
Eyes lifted, child face waiting,
Hearing that low, cold buzzing, as though a bee
Born out of ice and green-glazed snow,
Were floating through that space, through wires that flow
With fire entranced, with words from other worlds,
Swift and eternal, emerald and pearl.

GEORGE ABBE

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Washington Notes

Wanted: A Ministry of Information

ADMINISTRATION LEADERS are doing a lot of thinking and talking about the propaganda problem. Most of them are ready to acknowledge that the government's effort to tell the people of this country and of the world what the United States is up to has been a monumental flop. The organization of information agencies is chaotic. Good publicity bets have been overlooked and bad ones have been taken. Now that the shooting has started, the need for explaining what it is all about both at home and abroad is generally recognized. But there is still no agreement as to what, exactly, should be done about it. The President's speeches have established a consistent pattern, but nothing has been woven around them. They are not in themselves enough to tell the story and keep it told. It is a twenty-four-hour-a-day job that needs careful coördination.

The issue of religious freedom raised by this country's unofficial alliance with Russia was the most conspicuous example of a challenge that was accepted and then badly handled. President Roosevelt, taking it up in an off-hand way at a press conference, pointed to the Soviet Constitution as evidence that Russia is tolerant of organized religion. This oversimplification was quickly ripped to shreds by Catholic clergymen. Then the Russian Foreign Office spokesman made the worst of a bad situation by airily assuming that the President's answer had satisfied the religious world. As it turned out, the episode merely aggravated the Church's suspicions of Russia's godless rulers. The effect was probably worse in Latin America than in this country.

What the President said might better have been left unsaid unless he had assurances in advance that the Russians would play to his lead by giving the Church some guarantees beyond those set forth in their Constitution. Dispatches from Russia telling how churches are still open and freely attended might better have preceded the President's comments than followed them, discounted in advance as they were. The whole thing was a fiasco that some agency solely responsible for propaganda could have avoided by thinking the problem through and planning to meet it.

As matters stand, no agency is responsible for this kind of thinking and planning. Lowell Mellett, chief of the Office of Government Reports, who was first expected to direct propaganda activity, is a firm believer in the theory that a free, uncensored, unguided press will eventually create a unified public opinion in this country. He opposes censorship and guidance on principle. Taking that position, he could not be this war's George Creel.

Others who believe that public opinion at home as well as abroad must be helped to find its way have now undertaken to do certain parts of the job. Nelson Rockefeller and his committee have taken on the task of implementing the good-neighbor policy with propaganda in Latin America. William J. Donovan is doing the same thing with other parts of the world. Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia considers propaganda one of his tools in building civilian morale for defense. The publicity department of the Office of Production Management and publicity agents for other emergency agencies and for the established departments also try in a haphazard way to package government information attractively. Recently Archibald MacLeish, Librarian of Congress, was given the job of supervising the facts and figures in which all these other agencies deal. He is to look out for inconsistencies, duplications and contradictions.

But there still is no over-all agency to plan and coördinate. Jurisdictional disputes among the various agencies have developed into blue feuds. There is still no clear line of demarcation between the functions of the Rockefeller and Donovan committees, for example. Out of the confusion a sort of ministry of information may emerge.

John L. Lewis may or may not win his fight for a closed shop in the captive mines. He probably will. But whatever the outcome, he already has established a Washington legend. It is a legend of gall and it already has achieved Paul Bunyanesque proportions. No one ever told a bigger whopper about a blue ox than Lewis told the press last week in announcing that he and Myron Taylor had turned their dispute over to the National Defense Mediation Board.

"I may say that the entire basis for this agreement was the conference between Mr. Taylor and me yesterday," he pontificated. "Once again Mr. Taylor and I have been able to render a service at a time when it was in the national interest, and in a manner which has secured the gracious approval of the President."

Actually, Taylor and Lewis had agreed on nothing except disagreement and a strike when they went to the White House after their own conference. The President took an hour and forty-five minutes to argue them into an arrangement which would keep the mines open.

Kathryn Lewis, John's daughter, has, incidentally, quit the National Committee of CIO Women's Auxiliaries. There are two explanations: first, that the committee is too interventionist for her taste; second, that she would not be placed in the position of asking Phil Murray, chief of the CIO, to pay over to the Auxiliaries money voted for their maintenance at the last CIO convention because no Lewis ever asks anyone else in the labor movement for anything. Miss Lewis also is reported to have quit the America First Committee in protest against Lindbergh's Des Moines speech.

Senator Gerald P. Nye is behind the election contest against Senator William Langer of North Dakota. Nye also is a member of the committee trying the case. . . . The Justice Department will file anti-trust charges against the radio chains unless they accept regulation by the Federal Communications Commission. They have instituted injunction proceedings against the FCC to avoid compliance with its anti-monopoly rulings. . . . Ralph Ingersoll's report, after interviewing Joseph Stalin, that the Russian government thinks the Communist Parties of Great Britain and the United States have "made asses of themselves for years," amused and impressed administration authorities, who have had some unfortunate experiences with Communists in the government service.

Washington T. R. B.

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Regrettable

Candle in the Wind, by Maxwell Anderson. Shubert Theatre, October 22, 1941.

MR. S. A. LEWISOHN in the course of a very fine article for Art News (October 1-14 issue) discusses the influence of the Impressionist painters, however discounted they may be just now, on such men coming after them as Van Gogh, Renoir, Roualt and others, the release and incitement they afforded toward the paint element, the use and sense of paint itself. In a way the Impressionists made these artists possible.

I wish I might do as well by this subject of Mr. Anderson's newest play as that Lewisohn article, so defined, detailed and inside the painting art *per se*, has done for the painters. Regardless of my capacity in the matter, nevertheless, I may say that Mr. Lewisohn's article on the painters bears on this theatre occasion sharply, but bears on it obversely. Which is to say that the problem drama, or the sociological or the psychological, et cetera, drama of some while ago—men like Ibsen, Tolstoy and their profit-sharing disciples like Brieux, Giacosa, Pinero, Sudermann, Praga and others—made possible and likely the serious play like "Candle in the Wind," with its prominent content and aggressive topicality. Only such inherited interests in the solemn and the pseudo could shield and promote such rubbish as this new play now presented by the Theatre Guild and The Playwrights' Company. That and the worthy legend of Mr. Maxwell Anderson's work for the theatre.

The nature of rubbish in art is, of course, hard to define. I may say at the moment merely that seriousness of material—in "Candle in the Wind" it is not really a case of serious material but merely of the accidental background of war and Nazi violence—does not in itself make a play serious. Nor does the delivery of sententious platitudes denouncing what all of us in the audience are as much against as are those on the stage, however tiresome their statements of themselves may be, make for significance of any kind; nor do sententious platitudes defending what we are are one with the dramatist in defending, however flat his mottoes and virilities. Nevertheless "Candle in the Wind" could not be called pretentious; Mr. Anderson is too sincere for that. It is only loose, relaxed, suffocating and glib, glib with the fluent movement of what is never penetrated, realized or created. It is embarrassing; and to the critic, moreover, it is baffling, because one does not know just what line to take with a thing that means so well, muddles into the most passionate urgency of our epoch and remains so mediocre, overexplicit, banal, and in its approach so entirely bourgeois. A certain lively melodrama is implicit in this plot and situation, but making it dull does not give it significance; it merely takes away whatever life may have been possible. As a comment on the war the result is futile, therefore, and as theatre lifeless.

Miss Helen Hayes has won credits among divers reviewers of this event as being exalted, brilliant and otherwise for her performance of the heroine, Madeline Guest, a celebrated American actress. There is nothing, we may note, unless it is her constant supply of fresh gowns, with purse and gloves, to make us believe that she is of this luminous and complex profession of famous actress. There is nothing in her spiritual or mental characterization to make us believe that or to enrich the play's texture thereby, nothing of passion, invention or glorious great intent. We should note that Miss Hayes has to deliver some of the worst speeches in recent playwriting, and that she does not shirk the onus of delivering them. This may be due to her loyalty and sincerity as an actor or to her mediocrity and lack of instinct and distinguished culture as an artist. In my opinion it is due more or less to both, and the result is curiously insistent and monotonous and flat.

The story of "Candle in the Wind" is that Raoul St. Cloud falls into the hands of the Nazis and that Madeline is determined to get him released, which in the end, after many Nazi-like deceptions and ham-stage-Nazi frauds toward a brave little woman, and a change of heart on the part of Lieutenant Schoen, she accomplishes and gets her lover off to England and safety for democracy. The Nazi colonel takes away her passport; several people go out, and it only remains for Miss Hayes to proclaim a vast and shameless banality about the outcome of the struggle in this world of beasts and men: in the end, she says, the beasts always lose. It is hard to believe that such stuff could be seriously written, much less spoken seriously with all that sententious punch.

Mr. Tonio Selwart gives a good performance with clean elegance and distinct emotional values, of the lieutenant; and various other players do their Nazi parts with a certain Continental precision, especially in the wearing of their clothes. Miss Michelette Burani, as the mother of a prisoner, gives her usual full performance; though why the French mother and father and the German officers also should all speak with an accent is hard to follow, unless it be that all of them are trying to speak English, which would be unlike the Frenchmen in the park who speak like Miss Hayes. Mr. Jo Mielziner's two settings are expert and handsome; this Triangle Studios' painting for the Versailles Gardens is about the best stage stone I have seen rendered for us. These settings, though notable, are not really dramatic to the supposed mood of the play, a fact that does not matter, since no mood is really achieved in the play anyhow. The same applies to the costumes that Madame Valentina has supplied for Miss Hayes. Each of these many outfits is beautifully designed and executed. But they have no relation and make no contribution to the scenes they parade; they seem merely of different lengths and colors, monotonous in the values of fabric and texture; a fact, again, however, that does not matter, since the scenes have no dramatic tone. Frankly, what sort of play is it in which the heroine, as she does indeed all through this frustrated drama, appears in the midst of starvation and breadcrumbs for Paris, endowed with the identical tailoring, draping, new shoes and posturing that better days may have assured, or that at least throughout the play she has repeated in various hues, dry-cleaned and eternally pressed? In a stylized production, based on drapery if you like—stylized, note that—this might make a certain sense: the heroine always flowing in the milk and honey of special dresses. But the production of "Candle in the Wind" is not stylized; it essays the realistic and urgent.

Mr. Alfred Lunt has directed the play with admirable skill, with evident respect and diligence. Briefly in certain scenes a breath of life comes into the play. STARK YOUNG

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Happy Endings

SHOW PEOPLE have a word that is to them a final word, "sordid." If a picture is "sordid," they say—meaning if it is about the less fortunate or less admirable types of character—the public will not care for it. In a loose and very general way the rule might hold good, but it makes an absurd yardstick to measure any one picture by and it can only too easily be turned into a club to beat producers, writers and directors over the head with. The truth is that if a picture is well and soundly made and has the indispensables of interest and action, it can be "sordid" or anything else and let all prophetic crows be damned. "The Little Foxes" has about as much concentrated evil in main story and main characters as the films have ever tackled; and "The Little Foxes" is one of the three leading pictures in the current nationwide box office.

Now comes Alfred Hitchcock with one of the better known murder stories, a clever study in the abnormal and vicious under a cloak of charm. The book was called "Before the Fact," but they had to change the title of the movie to the much lamer one of "Suspicion," for the reason that there is no longer actually any fact. The book itself is too slow, talky and under-characterized for my taste, but the very capacities for speed, suspense and actual people of the films could have been used to turn it into an exciting picture. Well, they weren't. The show runs an hour and three-quarters and the suspense gets less and less. Hitchcock had planned to keep both the girl in the story and the audience guessing right up to the last minute, and get away from the "sordid" at the last minute by having everything happily explained. On paper it still looks like a good idea; on film it simply breaks down, first through the nature of things and second through the film's lapses.

It is about an irresponsible young Englishman, plausible, lovable even, but with a complete innocence of scruple and a terrible need for betting-money. And I think where it breaks down in the nature of things is that if this young man turns out to be no more than what he appears to be on the surface all along, what have you got? Cary Grant. He is a nice chap, and despite what Joan Fontaine is supposed to dread about him, you cannot but go on believing that he is just a nice chap. This transfers the center of interest to the suspicions of his wife, which are so admittedly ill founded as to make her a pretty negative type at best. So nothing happens except that a quick twist at the end explains everything to her satisfaction, if not the audience's.

The film is well cast all down the line. Cary Grant in particular is just right for that part; the picture's most successful figure is Nigel Bruce as Beaky, which is simply the case of a grand trouper having a grand time building up a part out of what in the original was very little. As a matter of fact, one of the reasons the original wasn't followed closely enough to achieve the original effect is that as human beings—which even actors are when they're good—it is hard to achieve the grim monotony of the book, which deals with a submoral soundrel, a tidy and vapid wife and a near-cretin from the public schools.

In every way save that of speed and form the production is a glossy, and done with a very shrewd eye for bringing out the inner conflict as it was redesigned. You do not say it was poor so much as that it was a disappointment, which is praise of a sort. The thing as it should have been to make sense, with certainty and horror mounting together, and faster, was not attempted—apparently because Hitchcock let an old and shaky attitude scare him into thinking more of his box office than of his story logic and picture effect. He is a wise enough man in films to know better, a big enough name in films to dare more and get away with it. Every film maker with his wits about him knows the constant demand for compromise and how to accede to it gracefully; but he should know even more what can and what can't be sacrificed if he is to make good pictures. Men with their eye on the box office soon find that they can maintain fame and income without making good pictures, and presently are not making them, and finally cannot.

There is nobody who makes bad comedies more funny than W. C. Fields—who is responsible for making them bad in the first place. "Never Give a Sucker an Even Break" is his newest and written by himself. It should have been about the life among carnival barkers and pitchmen that its title celebrates, or it should have been about something. Instead it is just an old-time farce showing Fields as a broken-down movie hack outlining a plot to a producer and acting out the plot through the main part of the picture. Young Gloria Jean is a sort of Deanna Durbin singer and heart interest; Fields is her uncle and although she is a cute kid I should say it generally serves her right.

There are other people scattered through the story, very scattered, and the irony of their situation is that most of what little work they do in the picture leaves you impatient for the solo appearance of the very man responsible for the dull absurdity of the state they find themselves in.

However, my sermon on the obsolescence of the movie comedy as a one-man series of turns is beginning to bore me too, and Fields of course has listened to no one since someone told him there wasn't any fire in Chicago. He is one of the natural funny men, against all odds and comers, and you could as soon reform him into pictures as you could get him on a diet of vegetable juices—probably with a result as fatal. Once again disaster is his friend; once again the forces of gravity and public opinion are against him, little recking that he is their master, at least of ceremonies. His nose is still red but unbloody, he still finds the rich and awful widow by the middle of the picture, he has still about him that majesty of place and breeding which turns the point of any blade save his own; he is still the gay dog with the old tricks—the business with the feet, the stick, the plug hat, the reflective but sonorous aside, the topper, nasal and triumphant, with which the entire architecture of the forces for order is toppled at least once in every picture. He is usually down but he is never right, and yet there is in him a kind of humor so deeply seated that familiarity becomes somehow a further extension of our delight in this figure which is already American legend, having built itself up by giving itself away. If there was ever a great clown in this time of changeover from the beer and music hall to the universal distribution of radio and films, I would say it was in the person and the character and the undying if corny gusto of Bill Fields, who moved mountains until they fell on him, and then brushed himself off and looked around for more.

OTIS FERGUSON

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The Bandwagon

The appointment of Samuel Rosenman to the high position he now occupies—and to whom even FDR is subordinate—represents the latest link in a chain which began during the American Revolution when the broker and loan shark, Haym Saloman, secured his people's place in American affairs.

The Civil War was a battle between Lincoln and the Rothschilds, although the facts have been all but suppressed. England, who gave all aid to the Confederacy short of war, was merely playing her age-old role of fronting for the internationalists. . . .

John Wilkes Boothe [sic], Lincoln's assassin, whose mother was a Jewess, was not the fanatic some historians would have us believe. Boothe was a paid agent of the Rothschilds. – *From a letter to the editor in Social Justice.*

FATHER AT 85—FERTILE LAWYER AND 42-YEAR-OLD WIFE HAVE EIGHTH CHILD. – *Head and subhead on an AP dispatch from Fertile, Minnesota, in The Minneapolis Morning Tribune.*

There are still a few reservations about admitting her [Tamara Toumanova] to the inner sanctum of classical achievement, for in those exalted circles a bit of strain would be noted in her petits tours, besides a careless throwing of the port de bras off into space at times, and other blemishes which, though mere peccadillos in the ordinary ranks, would be adjudged gauche among the elect. – *John Martin in The New York Times.*

Hoity-toity!

For all the circumstances to which they are accustomed, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor are simple diners, or at least they were the night this department viewed the ducal dining from an adjacent table at the Colony. Two waiters, a sommelier, a bus [boy] and a captain were the only functionaries assigned to their table of four. . . . They had one wine, a Chateau Gruand La Rose '24 and an unspecified fine champagne, presumably a forty-year Hines; smoked salmon, petite marmite, roast partridge with gaufrette potatoes and horseradish sauce, a green salad, cheese and coffee. Gene, the proprietor of the Colony, did no more than bow them to their table. "They aren't really regular patrons here, you know," he told the reporters. – *From Lucius Beebe's column in The New York Herald Tribune.*

Libel?

The Talmadge-dominated board of regents discharged Dr. Cocking because he allegedly had favored racial equality. The educator denied the charge. – *UP dispatch from Atlanta in The New York Times.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Non-Believers and the Law

SIR: President Roosevelt, in the attempt to justify military aid to Russia, quotes Article 124 of the Soviet Constitution. This article establishes separation of Church and State, Church and school, and guarantees freedom of conscience to the religious and irreligious alike.

The President says that virtually the same rule is applied in this country. For example, "on Pennsylvania Avenue anyone may preach religion on one corner and another speak against religion on the same corner without being halted." Mr. Roosevelt is apparently unaware that in the United States there are laws and court decisions not yet abrogated or overruled which discriminate severely against non-believers, and that the practice of the citizens is to mob unpopular religious sects. That has been shown quite recently in the savage onslaughts against Jehovah's Witnesses, a small sect which criticizes severely the larger denominations. Far from granting freedom of conscience, "believers" constitute a favored class protected by the State. Church property, to the value of several billions of dollars, is untaxed, though approximately half the population of the United States is not affiliated with any church.

Although severely attacked by Thomas Jefferson, blasphemy laws still exist in Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota and Vermont. A case was decided by the Supreme Judicial Court of Maine in 1919, resulting in a conviction. The sentence, needless to say, was not so severe as might have been inflicted in Massachusetts in 1641, Connecticut in 1646, Vermont in 1779 or Maryland in 1649, when the death penalty was provided for those who "blasphemed" or "denied" Deity.

Non-believers in future rewards and punishments and divine retribution are at a great disadvantage in the matter of taking oaths or affirming, and may be disqualified as witnesses or affiants, or as holders of public office. Killers have escaped justice because their victims were non-believers, and therefore the declaration of a dying man as to the identity of his assailant or the testimony of an "infidel" witness may be, in the language of the Supreme Court, "discredited by proof that he did not believe in a future state of rewards and punishments" (1897). Rapists have got off scot-free for the same reason. Similar cases have occurred in New Jersey (1857 and 1918), Alabama (1929), California (1872 and 1915), Mississippi (1809), Missouri (1920) and in other states.

Wills and trusts by the unorthodox are precarious. No less a person than Daniel Webster assaulted the "anti-religious clauses" of Stephen Girard's will. Though the Supreme Court upheld the will, it did so on the ground that the instrument did not sustain infidelity or attack Christianity. Levi Nice provided in his will that certain real estate "shall go to and be held in fee simple by the Infidel Society of Philadelphia . . . and to be held and disposed of by them for the purpose of building a hall for the free discussion of religion, politics, etc." (1870). No specious reasoning was neglected by the supreme court of Pennsylvania in reaching the conclusion that the trust was invalid. In connection with Dr. James Rush's will, it might be of interest to ascertain how far the Ridgway Branch of the Philadelphia Library has carried out his intentions.

Office-holders who are honest non-believers may be seriously

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embarrassed by Clause 3 of Article VI of the Federal Constitution, which requires that "Senators and Representatives and the members of the several states shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." The Declaration of Rights in Maryland provides that an office-holder must believe in the existence of God; practically the same provision is to be found in the Constitutions of Mississippi, Texas, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Arkansas, North Carolina and South Carolina.

As for the separation of school and Church in this country, continued attempts are made to impose Bible-reading in the schools regardless of the offense which may be caused by the use of the King James Version not only to non-believers but to Catholics and Jews. A favorite device is the dismissal of children on certain days in the week for religious instruction. Records must be kept by schoolteachers thus using public money for church benefit.

Public funds are paid out to transport children in buses to private and parochial schools. This provision was tucked away in the New York State Constitution recently adopted, and the legislature passed a law requiring funds to be paid out for such transportation even though a hardship should be inflicted on the district thus taxed.

It is not possible to give in this brief space an adequate account of the discriminations in the United States which deny to non-believers the equal protection of the Constitution and the laws.

Philadelphia, Pa. MARY WINSOR

Song of America First

SIR: The propaganda of the America First Committee doubtless has a varied effect. The following verses, with apologies to Lewis Carroll, are my reaction to America First:

'Twas quisling and the vichy saps
Did nye and lindbergh in the bund.
All nazi were the clarks and japs,
And the Rome wops outrunned.

"Beware the British Lion, my son;
"The jaws that bite, the claws that clax;
"Beware the Churchill bird and shun
The frumious Halifax."

He took his wheeler sword in hand;
Long time the hitler foe he sought.
So rested he by the Teuton tree,
And stood appeased in thought.

And as in uffish mood he stood,
The British Lion with eyes of flame
Came whiffing through to General Wood
And burbled as it came.

One, two, one two, and through and through
The wheeler blade went snicker snack.
He left it dead and with its head
He went sieg heiling back.

"And hast thou slain the British Lion?
"Come to my arms, my hamfish boy.
"Oh darlan day, Corap, Calais."
He lavaled in his joy.

'Twas quisling and the vichy saps
Did nye and lindbergh in the bund.
All nazi were the clarks and japs,
And the Rome wops outrunned.

New York City ROBERT W. WOOD JR.

"Hannele" and "The Sunken Bell"

SIR: In his excellent review of Lorca's plays (The New Republic, October 13) Stark Young says of a scene in "If Five Years Pass" that "even the Hannele scenes in Hauptmann's 'The Sunken Bell,' beautiful as they are, suffer by the comparison."

I have no doubt that by now more than one of Mr. Young's friends have reminded him that there are no Hannele scenes in "The Sunken Bell" because Hannele does not appear in "The Sunken Bell" but rather in a play of her own named "Hannele." I point this out not to annoy Mr. Young but in the hope that he will read "The Sunken Bell" and "Hannele" over again. I believe he will enjoy them as much as ever.

University of Washington, Seattle, Wash. JOSEPH B. HARRISON

SIR: In reading the proof of my review of the Lorca translations by Richard O'Connell and James Graham, I failed to make a correction for the sentence, "Even the Hannele scenes in Hauptmann's 'The Sunken Bell.' . . . It should read " 'Hannele' scenes and". . . . Numerous readers have and will kindly call my attention to the matter. This at least gives me a chance to record my long-standing gratitude to Miss Eva Le Gallienne for her beautiful "Hannele," which I saw three times.

New York City STARK YOUNG

Books and Blurbs

SIR: Congratulations on your very fine fall book number [October 27]. I enjoyed the articles and the poetry very much and want to put in a word for Stanley Hyman, whose recent reviews, particularly that of Cain and Farrell, show an appreciative intelligence.

There are several comments, the only one of which I can think of in reference to the recent exchange of letters about radio advertising is an advertisement of E. P. Dutton on page 545 that I wish you could put into your Bandwagon column under the heading: "We'll-Tell-the-World Department, Cambridge, Mass."

Dr. Sorokin [of Harvard] has written a monumental work that will rank with Darwin's "Origin of Species" as a keystone in man's understanding of his own development.

To me it is a very sad commentary on the integrity of the American press that such claims are allowed to be made so prematurely. Don't you think we need an honest-claims law in advertising? This is just as bad as "Armstrong Tires, 33.4% more miles" (than what?).

Cambridge, Mass. ALBERT ENGLAND JR., M.D.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

From Ashley Montagu, Narberth, Pennsylvania, we have received an SOS on behalf of the English quarterly Scrutiny which, after "ten years of brilliant work," is threatened with extinction unless one hundred new subscribers can be obtained. He urges all of our readers who are interested in "excellent writing and sound criticism" to send three dollars for a year's subscription to Scrutiny, care of Deighton, Bell and Company, Ltd., Trinity Street, Cambridge, England.

A dissenting opinion on the letter from Senator Murray of Montana in the October 20 issue: Randall Hayes Clark, Helena, Montana, cites the results of two separate polls, one conducted by The Montana Highway News, the other by The Carbon County News. The former, he says, showed that 72 percent of the state's voters would support Senator Wheeler if an election were held this month, while only 39 percent of the same voters would support Senator Murray. The latter poll showed that 87.5 percent of Montanans opposed American entry into the war.

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Books in Review

Three Poets

CRITICS writing about Louise Bogan have usually discussed her technique, and there is good reason for this emphasis. What seemed to be the subject matter of her first two volumes was not at all striking—love that is all-powerful but fleeting, chastity that is a lie, tears shed alone at night; in general the themes that were being treated by dozens of women poets during the 1920's. But her real subject, implicit in her manner of writing, was always poetry itself. She was saying by her example that the duty of the poet is to crowd all possible meaning into a few short lines; to find the exact word, the one right image, the rhythm just awkward enough to vary the pattern without breaking it entirely. She was saying that such poetry is terrifyingly difficult to write, but worth all the years and pains one devotes to it. And she was saying that art is fearful as well as beautiful; it is the Gorgon's head that can forever fix an evanescent landscape:

> The water will always fall, and will not fall,
> And the tipped bell make no sound.
> The grass will always be growing for hay
> Deep on the ground.

With such a theory of art, it is difficult or impossible to write a great deal. "Poems and New Poems"[1] is not a big volume, but it contains everything that Miss Bogan thinks is worth saving from her work of the last twenty years. There are seventy-two poems, mostly short lyrics, taken from her three earlier books; and sixteen others written in various manners since "The Sleeping Fury" appeared in 1937. Other poets publish more in a single season. Even quantitatively, however, Miss Bogan has done something that has been achieved by very few of her contemporaries: she has added a dozen or more to our small stock of memorable lyrics. She has added nothing whatever to our inexhaustible store of trash.

Nevertheless, I hope she now decides to make some change in her theory and practice of the poet's art. Together they have been confining her to a somewhat narrow range of expression. Her new poems—meditative, witty and sometimes really wise—suggest that she has more to say than can be crowded into any group of lyrics; and that perhaps she should give herself more space and less time. Most American poets write too much and too easily; Miss Bogan ought to write more, and more quickly, and even more carelessly. There are poems, sometimes very good ones, that have to be jotted down quickly or lost forever.

Marianne Moore is among the most impersonal of our poets; at the same time she is the most individual. Very early in her career she invented a new prosody and discovered a new subject matter; she has remained faithful to both of them. The prosody resembles that of French verse in totally neglecting accent; it depends on the number of syllables in the line, not the number of stresses. The lines are combined into complicated stanza forms, to which she strictly adheres, even in her longest poems. In her rhymes, as in her meters, she pays no attention to accent; thus, she pairs "scale" with "central" and "armored" with "sword." As for her subject matter, it is the world of small animate or inanimate things: walking sticks and paper weights and water marks; swallow-tail butterflies, the paper nautilus, "the cardinal-bird that is usually a pair" and "jet-black pansies—not for a decade dressed, but for a day, in overpowering velvet." Always her characterizations are brilliant, her observations exact; and usually toward the end of her longer poems there is a reference back to human destiny; not so much a moral as an emotionally justified and moving parallel.

Like Miss Bogan—whom otherwise she resembles not at all—she prints nothing that fails to meet her own rigorous standards. "What Are Years"[1] is the first book she has published in this country since her selected verse appeared in 1935. It contains fifteen poems, two of which deal with new subjects. There is a comment on the fall of France, not wholly effective; and there is a celebration of human freedom in bondage that rightly comes first in the book; it is among the noblest lyrics of our time.

George Barker's poems are another story entirely. Instead of being appalled by the difficulties facing a poet; instead of subjecting his sensations to rigorous criticism; instead of publishing nothing until it has been chiseled and sandpapered into its final shape, he puts his critical sense to sleep and makes poems out of his dreams. He writes and writes—perhaps with heartbreaking toil, it is hard to say; but certainly the impression he gives is of almost effortlessly setting down on paper everything that comes into his head. It is a talented head, almost a head of genius, and a great deal comes into it—visions of the modern world, parables of man's fate, trivial comments on love and life, profound observations—everything in an amazing stream, a cataract of sounds and images, but apparently subject to no discipline whatsoever; he makes his own rules for the pleasure of breaking them.

His "Selected Poems,"[2] are not selected enough; the book is full of pieces which Barker will some day be glad to forget. Especially when writing about public themes, as he often does, he has a habit of moving in the wrong direction—not from the self outwards, as Miss Bogan does in her best lyrics, until the personal has become the universal; but rather from public disaster backwards and downwards to his own private cares. On one occasion this movement is summarized in a single line—"The Polish bugles raze my Jericho"—as if the worst tragedy of the war was that his own walls of illusion came tumbling down.

[1] Poems and New Poems, by Louise Bogan. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 127 pages. $2.50.

[1] What Are Years, by Marianne Moore. New York: The Macmillan Company. 54 pages. $1.50.

[2] Selected Poems, by George Barker. New York: The Macmillan Company. 157 pages. $1.90.

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But I don't want to give the impression that Barker is a negligible poet. On the contrary, his visions at their best are powerful, even overwhelming—as, for example, in his poem about England before Munich, and in his dream about the Amazons of death. Even his weaker poems make exhilarating reading, simply by their freedom and their wealth of images; his horse is Hyperbole rather than Pegasus, but it carries him through the clouds. And he has, moreover, a gift for making final statements. Nobody else has expressed so well the feeling of guilt that oppresses this generation as Barker has done in the last six lines of his "Pacific Sonnets":

> Whenever we kissed we cocked the future's rifles
> And from our wildoat words, like dragon's teeth,
> Death underfoot now arises. When we were gay,
> Dancing together in what we hoped was life,
> Who was it in our arms but the whores of death
> Whom we have found in our beds today, today?

MALCOLM COWLEY

Stories, Tall and Short

The Heart of Another, by Martha Gellhorn. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 267 pages. $2.50.
1001 Afternoons in New York, by Ben Hecht. New York: The Viking Press. 370 pages. $3.
Here We Are, edited by Ernestine Taggard. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. 404 pages. $2.50.

"THE HEART OF ANOTHER" is a throwing together of nine stories by a good writer who is also a sedulous borrower, an accomplished and even hardy traveler, and a union-man's Clare Boothe. Spain, Corsica, Bavaria, Finland, Paris, Cuba—languages and stuff. It is sometimes dangerous not to be able to stay home for a minute, sometimes oppressive, but it is very fine. The people are wonderful and it is firm and solid and singing and lovely and very fine. The story, "Luigi's House," is a story and a good one. The rest of the short ones are either fragments or anecdotes, or just an account of days and people and how interestingly you got through them or to them, or about how it was fine. The first part of the book, in or related to Spain, is so closely studied as to material and treatment that I think you could trace it from sections of the treatment alone:

> It is gay music and sounds like a boating song. The colored boys thought it was fine. Then we sang the Basque hymn which is great music and when you sing it, or hear it sung, you wear a respectful face no matter how drunk you may be. It is a straight rising, solid brave and tragic song. . . . To hear it makes you want to cry and it makes shivers go up and down your back. . . .
>
> Just a little way down from Chicote's on the Gran Via we saw a wide new hole, the granite cobblestones lying smashed and dusty around it, and leading to the nearest doorway was a neat straight fresh trail of blood. Chicote's was crowded with soldiers and civilians and handsome Spanish girls with peroxided hair. The beer was cold and good [end of story].

And sometimes it breaks down through aping into mush: ". . . his hands, his weight, his warmth, the wildness, the owning, the black dark soft lost melting ending. . . ."

There are two extra-long pieces—indeed the book shapes around them. One is a story of some gal correspondent in Finland which has just enough acid to make it objective, and is therefore not, I suppose, to be considered as a self-portrait. The other is an endless, sometimes pointless, account of a little time in France shortly before the Nazis got ready to move in. It mounts to a bitter and reasoned statement against those who turned, betrayed, scuttled and/or were carelessly gay. It is good stuff as it stands. If it had been pulled into some shape, tightened all over and made to run on one track, it would have been very fine.

And in Ben Hecht's "1001 Afternoons in New York" (the number fortunately is an exaggeration), you will find another writer with a gift and a vague literary disease. This is a collection of pieces from PM, and in his work for that paper Ben Hecht establishes himself as the union man's O. O. McIntyre. He has a handy way with morgue assistants and desk sergeants, and he still has the reporter's brass and legs to run down a story. He has indignation and compassion for the underdog (sometimes they seem to be freely on tap); he has a veteran's knowledge of why a story will be old stuff and how to kid it as he writes it; and he writes with color and a fine range of allusion, quite often with a bang.

These pieces range from an inverted lushness of misery on Houston Street to the literary tribute (the one on Sherwood Anderson is not only affectionate and good, but penetrating); from polemic and a constant obsession with being a Jew while insisting there is no such race, to round stories of the old days, to chump-baiting and allegories. No man who has to whip up stuff for a daily should be judged by the standards of the leisurely book-writing man; but perhaps he shouldn't have tried covers on it in the first place. Ben Hecht's reporting is more roving and fanciful and literary than standard newspaper stuff. But while it is 50-percent emotion, it still carries that central indifference and news-nose for the shocking of a man to whom the day's print is his living. Joseph Mitchell—no such honor graduate of a school—can still give him cards and spades simply because in his stuff the interest and feeling seem to have come first: they are implicit in the story that came out of them and therefore do not have to be faked and bawled over. So many afternoons in one book give me the same personal but vague distaste as the anti-human (and anti-clean line) work of its illustrator, George Grosz. Both men are possibly great artists in some sense or other, but this afternoon *I'm* the reporter for a change.

Every anthology needs an excuse, and the excuse in "Here We Are" is the rather transparent one that all the twenty stories were published in Scholastic. They were, but all except one were published somewhere else first, in all different places and times; and when Dorothy Canfield Fisher says in her introduction that the authors are all young because outside of three none is over fifty years old, she gives it another limp. Still, as an anthology it is one of the best, not because it includes all the best story writers, which it doesn't by a whole list of names, but because the stories are good. There is an outright piece of slick-paper trash by Katharine Brush; there are amateurish whimsies by Saroyan and Martha Foley. Otherwise they are either pretty good (3), good (9), or tops: Sinclair Lewis' "Young Man Axelbrod," Marjorie Rawlings' "A Mother in

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Mannville," Katherine Anne Porter's "Rope," Ring Lardner's "I Can't Breathe," George Milburn's "Student in Economics"—which for all-round story quality is about the best. If you'd like to have a modern-American story anthology at all, you might as well have a good one.

OTIS FERGUSON

Meet the British

The Penguin Hansard. Volume I, From Chamberlain to Churchill. Volume II, The National Effort. Volume III, Britain Gathers Strength. New York: Penguin Books. 780 pages. 25 cents each.

IT IS OUR PROUD BOAST, one verified long years ago by the most discerning foreign critic of American character—the Englishman James Bryce—that we do not do things by halves. Adoring and reviling, building high and tearing down, we make a lively life of it for ourselves, our enemies and our friends. Our friends and our enemies, at the moment, are Bryce's fellow countrymen. Arthur, Lancelot and Guinevere to most, the scheming Sir Modred to others, it is not the Germans but the people of Britain upon whom America bestows the last full measure of emotion.

But is that enough? Should we not also accord the British the honor of thinking about them? What we do in concert with them now is important. What we shall do, or refuse to do, a decade hence will be even more important. It would be profitable to all if there were continuity between the states of mind.

We think, or at least we have heard, that the British are hard to know. It can no longer be said that they are hard to meet. By one of those flashes of inspiration, the editors of the series of paper-bound Penguin Books have thought to put Great Britain between covers, in three volumes. "The Penguin Hansard" is taken verbatim from the House of Commons official report of Parliamentary debates. Parts of it read lightning fast, parts slowly; all is hard on the eyes and priceless. The cost is 75 cents, a quarter a volume.

The three books do not run in chronological sequence. They cover a little more than a year, beginning August 24, 1939, when the House came back from its summer recess to hear that war was about to start, to November 5, 1940, when Churchill told the story of the Battle of Britain. Within that period they overlap, divided by subjects. Volume I is "From Chamberlain to Churchill." It is the one which reads like a beautifully constructed play, its climax the great debate which overturned the Chamberlain ministry. Volume II, "The National Effort," begins with the session of September 5, 1939, and runs through that of August 8, 1940. It deals chiefly with problems of economics, the questions of labor, supply, taxation, industrial production and economic policy in general. Volume III, to which the editors have given the title "Britain Gathers Strength," picks up where the first volume left off, with the first session of the Churchill government.

Hansard is the British counterpart of The Congressional Record. As reprinted here, it has of course been cut. Speeches are omitted entirely, and others are shortened, the deletions being indicated. "No partisan or personal consideration," write the publishers, "has determined any abridgment." The diversity of tone and unevenness in point of strength and expository skill indicate that the editing has been done with scrupulous objectivity. But the editing has sharpened the narrative value. One must remember, reading these volumes, that no group of men the earth has seen could argue so hotly and hold to the point so well as this transcript suggests.

Does Parliament speak for the British people? I think no man can read these books without agreeing that, under his own eyes, the House of Commons transforms itself so that Parliament and people come together. One realizes also, far more clearly than from spasmodic cabled reports, that the process of self-criticism by the British, expressed through their representatives in Parliament, did not end when Chamberlain left office. The character of the British people created the House of Commons. When further changes come, Parliament will take the responsibility for them. In so far as the United States is dealing with Britain, it will be dealing with a ministry called to account by the House.

That the House as a whole and the House alone is responsible for the management of British affairs is the first of the two facts which stand out on every page of Hansard. "I say that the House must take its full responsibility," declared Major Attlee, in the great debate. The theme recurs continually. There are sharpest differences of opinion as to what action is desirable (or whether any is); none as to where control of it would lie. And members of the House represent the nation as a whole. One seldom hears reference to a constituency. "When future historians search The Congressional Record I want no doubt to exist in their minds as to the stand taken by the congressman from the Sixth Missouri Congressional District," said Representative Bennett in Congress the other day. Hansard has none of that.

What falls strangely on American ears are frank references to class. "I may be wrong, but I am utterly suspicious of the ruling class," says Mr. Kirkwood. "There is no doubt that the richer classes under this most drastic taxation, will have to revise the scale of their lives," remarks Sir George Schuster. "Do not let them begin to economize by dismissing their staffs." Family retainers were the one special group for which a representative of the ministry itself expressed solicitude, seconding Sir George.

The point for us is not that Britain has resolved her conflicting interests, but that the authority of the power which attempts to resolve them is undivided. Mr. Peake, Undersecretary of State for the Home Department, summarized the problem thus: "One of the great advantages of our procedure is that we can with confidence give Ministers powers, especially if we have confidence in them, and we should give these powers, because our procedure enables us to raise the issue of how they are being utilized any day when the House is sitting." An American, watching the hands-around dance of executive, legislative and judicial powers in his own government, is frankly envious. The comparison, of course, is not between democratic government and some other kind, but between what Woodrow Wilson called Cabinet and Committee government. Wilson in his early days proposed a constitutional amendment which would permit United States Cabinet members to be members of the House, looking toward the centralized

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authority of Cabinet government in that chamber. What we have been forced to evolve, that some business may be transacted, is party government, which gets something done if the Chief Executive controls his party and if his party stays in command of Congress during his term of office and if the Supreme Court is willing. The process of evolution has not ended. We can profitably analyze the procedure to which Mr. Peake refers.

The second fact which these volumes underscore is that the British, in Parliament, do practise the process of analysis. To the idea that Parliament is fully responsible for the welfare of the British nation is subjoined the idea that the House of Commons *must* examine the actions of the few men, the Cabinet and the Prime Minister, into whose hands it has put the execution of this full power. The House does so. Here is where the narrative gets lively, because there is, naturally, in Parliament as anywhere else, intense opposition to the critical process. Party loyalties intervene to check it: Chamberlain appealed openly to these loyalties. Indeed, reading Hansard you feel that it was touch and go whether he would be turned out; the vote which expressed the House's lack of confidence was close, 281 to 200. Some members are horrified at the critical procedure on the grounds of patriotism. "I say to the Labor members that they are not helping the conduct of the war when they continually snipe at the Prime Minister and his friends. . . . These acrimonious debates are undermining the strength of the country by undermining confidence in those who have the direction of affairs," protests the Rt. Hon. G. Lambert. There are those who are satisfied that whatever is, is right and who applaud inertia in the name of level-headedness. "No amount of lying by Germany will hide the fact that she has taken a very bad knock in Norway," explains Sir Archibald Southly, soothingly. "Thank God we are led by a Prime Minister who is not easily rattled and who possesses the gift of patience, which so many of us lack," says Sir G. Courthope.

Oratory gets in the way. Woodrow Wilson saw the orator's power as very close to the heart of the British parliamentary system. Not so, many of the British. Perhaps the sharpest point of contrast between parliamentary and congressional debate is that speakers in the former are concerned, not to influence public opinion at large, but to persuade one another. (There is no "Extension of Remarks" in Hansard, that device whereby American congressmen read undelivered speeches into The Record, using the floor of Senate and House as a letter shop for nation-wide mail advertising.) Knowing that minds will be changed by words spoken during the debate, members of the House of Commons constantly warn one another against the deceptions of eloquence. "The First Lord of the Admiralty this evening, I understand, will wind up this debate," says Commander Bower, as the division which would seal the fate of Chamberlain approached. "He is a great orator, and I have no doubt will put over a very convincing case, but I am certain that he will not use his great gift of oratory, that harlot of the arts, to present a case in which he does not believe."

Churchill presented his case with integrity. But Winston Churchill, the dissenter, now in power, does not take kindly to the critical procedure directed toward himself, as witness more than one angry outburst in later debates in these volumes and his recent fling at "natural and professional crabs."

For the critical process at its best, turn to the speech of the Rt. Hon. L. C. M. S. Amery, in Volume I of these books. Mr. Amery is a Tory. But he was speaking for his country as a whole and he spoke superbly:

> We cannot go on as we are. There must be a change. First and foremost, it must be a change in the system and structure of our government machine. This is war, not peace. The essence of peacetime democratic government is discussion, conference and agreement; the Cabinet is in a sense a miniature Parliament. The main aim is agreement, the widest possible measure of agreement. To secure that it is necessary to compromise, to postpone, to rediscuss. Under those conditions there are no far-reaching plans for sudden action. It is a good thing to let policies develop as you go along and get people educated by circumstances.
>
> . . . Facility in debate, ability to state a case, caution in advancing an unpopular view, compromise and procrastination are the natural qualities—I might almost say virtues—of a political leader in time of peace. They are fatal qualities in war.
>
> . . . Some three hundred years ago, when this House found that its troops were being beaten again and again by the dash and daring of Cavaliers, by Prince Rupert's cavalry, Oliver Cromwell spoke to John Hampden. In one of his speeches he recounted what he said. It was this: "I said to him, 'Your troops are most of them old, decayed serving men and tapsters and such kind of fellows. . . . You must get men of a spirit that are likely to go as far as they will go, or you will be beaten still.' "
>
> . . . I have quoted words of Oliver Cromwell. I will quote certain other words. I do it with great reluctance, because I am speaking of those who are old friends and associates of mine, but they are words which, I think, are applicable to the present situation. This is what Cromwell said to the Long Parliament when he thought that it was no longer fit to conduct the affairs of the nation:
>
> "You have sat too long here for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go."

It was the hammer-stroke which ended Chamberlain, a speech which will find its way into the textbooks and the anthologies, sober in tone, reasoned from the particular—the details of the then recent fiasco in Norway—to the general—the principles of democratic government in peace and war—to a specific conclusion which ended a chapter of history.

One need not agree wholly with Mr. Amery's principles of government; one is challenged, of course, to question them. But we can look toward Britain today with eyes that are freshly opened, opened not by a reflex of generous feeling but by the clear consciousness that we, like Britain, are in danger, that our future, too, is uncertain, and that we need the collaboration of our kind. It will make a great difference where in Britain, and at what British men, we look. There are first and second-rate men, first and second-rate ideas, in every nation. Are not the great men of Britain, from Hampden and Cromwell and Milton, those who have dared to use their minds, who have thought to re-examine principles in times of crisis? Britain's stature is the stature of her great dissenters. The material for our own analysis is in these books.

BYRON DEXTER

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Sharecroppers' Story

Boot-Heel Doctor, by Fannie Cook. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. 286 pages. $2.50.

WHEN the state troopers of Missouri moved the "striking" sharecroppers back from the main highways a couple of winters ago, we knew that respectable Missouri was not solving the problem but was merely trying to make the nation forget. And—we forgot. But Fannie Cook didn't. Now she tells the story of southeast Missouri: rich wheatland converted to cotton; cotton methods and Negroes introduced; white farmers slipping from landowners to tenants to sharecroppers, there to join the Negroes, and with them finally to be dispossessed, first by the Mississippi River on a rampage, then by mechanized farming, greedy planters and an inappropriate agricultural policy. It is, in a sentence, the challenge of a sick cotton economy, made sicker by Yankee exploitation, to simple farm people, and their response.

Mrs. Cook sketches the situation at its different levels. The connecting thread is the life of Dr. Joel Gregory, who doctors all groups of the community—the planters, who are more ignorant and selfish than vicious, the patient Negroes, and all between. Through his fight against the community's most dread disease—its way of life—the doctor is involved in the conflict which drives the croppers to make their desperate appeal for the nation's attention and correction. Has the appeal been answered? The federal government has done something; a few persons, numbering Fannie Cook and Josephine Johnson (to whom the novel is dedicated), have done something; but no real approach to a solution has yet been made.

Mrs. Cook writes with quiet beauty and realism (she ministers to two doctors—husband and son—as well as to sharecroppers). Her word pictures and figures of speech are particularly good, though occasionally strained. The climax, in which the doctor saves the Negro ringleader from lynching, is swift and powerful. However, the story starts slowly, with its movement more apparent in retrospect than at the time of reading.

As a sociological study this book fails to indicate adequately the extent of the region affected and the depth and intricacies of the causes. As a novel it does not quite succeed in making "the people" real. They are outlines of persons. Is this because people get that way after they have been kicked around so much? Or is it one of the difficulties of the proletarian novel written by a non-proletarian for non-proletarian readers?

Just the same, we need a batch of novels like this—so people everywhere in the United States won't have to feel that if only the people in other states did something everything would be all right. R. J. BLAKELY

A Correction

In the review of E. M. Butler's "Rainer Maria Rilke" (The New Republic, October 27) we ascribed the book to the Macmillan Company at Cambridge, Massachusetts. Actually it is published by the Cambridge [England] University Press, and imported and sold in this country by the Macmillan Company of New York. – THE EDITORS

A Reader's List

FATAL PARTNERS: WAR AND DISEASE, by Ralph H. Major (Doubleday, Doran, $3.50). A gruesome but timely and informative account of what war does to man, beginning with the Greeks and ending with the defeat of the Loyalists in Spain. The author, a medical man, spares us few details in his narrative of disease, pestilence, starvation, epidemics and all-around agony. A bleak chapter on Napoleon reminds those of us who are nervous about the present eastern front that he entered Russia at the head of 363,000 troops, and left it six months later with only 20,000.

THE MAN WHO LIVED FOR TOMORROW, by Wade W. Oliver (Dutton, $3.75). An authoritative biography of Dr. William Hallock Park, the man who did more than anyone else to establish the efficient public-health services of New York City. A mine of information on the medical and social history of the city, with particular reference to Dr. Park's brilliant work in the control of diphtheria and other epidemics. With Dr. Park laboratory science, in the best traditions of Europe and America, replaced the costly touch-and-go methods of an earlier time. An important and valuable sourcebook for the history of American medicine.

TORCH AND CRUCIBLE: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ANTOINE LAVOISIER, by Sidney J. French (Princeton, $3.50). The "father of modern chemistry" presented in a well rounded biography by a chemist who is also a historian with a thorough knowledge of sources and a sense of dramatic values. Lavoisier's connections with the powerful duPont family, his influence upon early American chemists, his fatal political blunders, the variety and immense significance of his contributions to science and industry, are

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By SEYMOUR E. HARRIS

Harvard University

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brought out in a narrative that is both critical and warmly sympathetic. Lavoisier went to the guillotine, not because the Republic "had no need of scientists," but because the Empire had too great a need for tax-gatherers.

BERLIN EMBASSY, by William Russell (Dutton, $2.50). An ex-clerk in the American Embassy in Berlin tells what he saw there. Not all that he saw, though. The author's style is a model of diplomatic caution. He tells his anecdotes about the Nazis with the air of a little boy swearing while his grandmother is in the next room.

THIS IS ENGLAND TODAY, by Allan Nevins (Scribner's, $1.25). Odds and ends picked up on a journey through England by a crack historian who teaches at Columbia and Oxford Universities and writes for The New York Times. A slim, hastily written volume compared to the solid historical jobs Nevins usually turns out. The thesis is that England has what it takes to beat Hitler.

GUSTAV MAHLER, by Bruno Walter. With a biographical essay by Ernest Krenek (Greystone, $3). As his disciple and interpreter, Walter writes warmly of the incorruptible composer-conductor who cleaned up the Vienna Opera and who admired Wagner while repudiating Wagnerism in his own massive works. Krenek, the twelve-tone missionary, sees Mahler as a forerunner of modern techniques. A loose but curious book.

THE LIFE AND WORK OF ANTON DVORAK, by Paul Stefan. Translated from the German by Y. W. Vance (Greystone, $3). The first complete study of Dvorak (1841-1904) published in this country. Several new anecdotes, an exhaustive compilation of his works and a good introductory chapter on Czech music help, but they barely enough offset a too-reverent approach to "the master" with its consequent general dullness.

BARRIE: The Story of J. M. B., by Denis Mackail (Scribner's, $3.75). Somewhat slavish official biography of the querulous, self-centered little son of a Scots weaver who rode to fame, fortune and luncheon dates with prime ministers on his shrewd output of whimsy and sentimentality. Whatever is revealing here about Barrie is glimpsed through a smother of irrelevant detail. And Mackail is too good a friend to be a good critic.

ANTHONY WAYNE, by Harry Emerson Wildes (Harcourt, Brace, $3.75). Here is the soundest biography of General Wayne yet written, sympathetic but thoroughly fair. Anthony loved his rum, thought of himself as a lady-killer and could be a thoroughly difficult fellow. But he was also one of Washington's most effective generals, whether against the British or the Indians, and he gets his due in a book whose only major fault is its tiring mass of detail.

JACOB, by Irving Fineman (Random House, $2.50). Here, done up in fiction, is a chapter out of the Bible, which is a job that perhaps had best be left alone unless you happen to be Thomas Mann. Mr. Fineman, undaunted, lets Jacob tell his own story—his rivalry with Esau, his betrayal by Laban in the matter of wives, his spiritual tussles—and concludes with an appeal to men of sensibility and good will.

ISLAND IN THE CORN, by John Selby (Farrar and Rinehart, $2.75). How a nice, though somewhat annoyingly patrician Midwestern family lost its money in the eighties but kept its collective soul and good manners through it all. Father was a too idealistic business man but a grand fellow, and the rest of the family is so nice too that you'll enjoy the trip downhill, and no feeling sorry either.

Contributors

MAX WERNER's latest book is "Battle for the World: The Diplomacy of the Second World War," recently published by Modern Age Books.

ROI OTTLEY has been for seven years a reporter, feature writer, columnist and editor of Harlem's Amsterdam News. This fall Duell, Sloan and Pearce will bring out a history of Negro life which he edited.

E. D. KENNEDY, for ten years an associate editor of Time and Fortune, is the author of "Dividends to Pay." His most recent book is "The Automobile Industry," published by Reynal and Hitchcock.

JOHN STRACHEY is the English author, among other books, of "The Coming Struggle for Power." His most recent books are "A Faith to Live For" and "Digging for Mrs. Miller," both published this year by Random House. He is a Flying Officer in the RAF.

GEORGE ABBE is an English instructor at Mount Holyoke College, the author of a novel, "Voices in the Square," and of a collection of poetry, "Wait for These Things."

R. J. BLAKELY is on the editorial staff of The Register and Tribune in Des Moines, Iowa.

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